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JUNE 1972 $1.00

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by Abigail McCarthy

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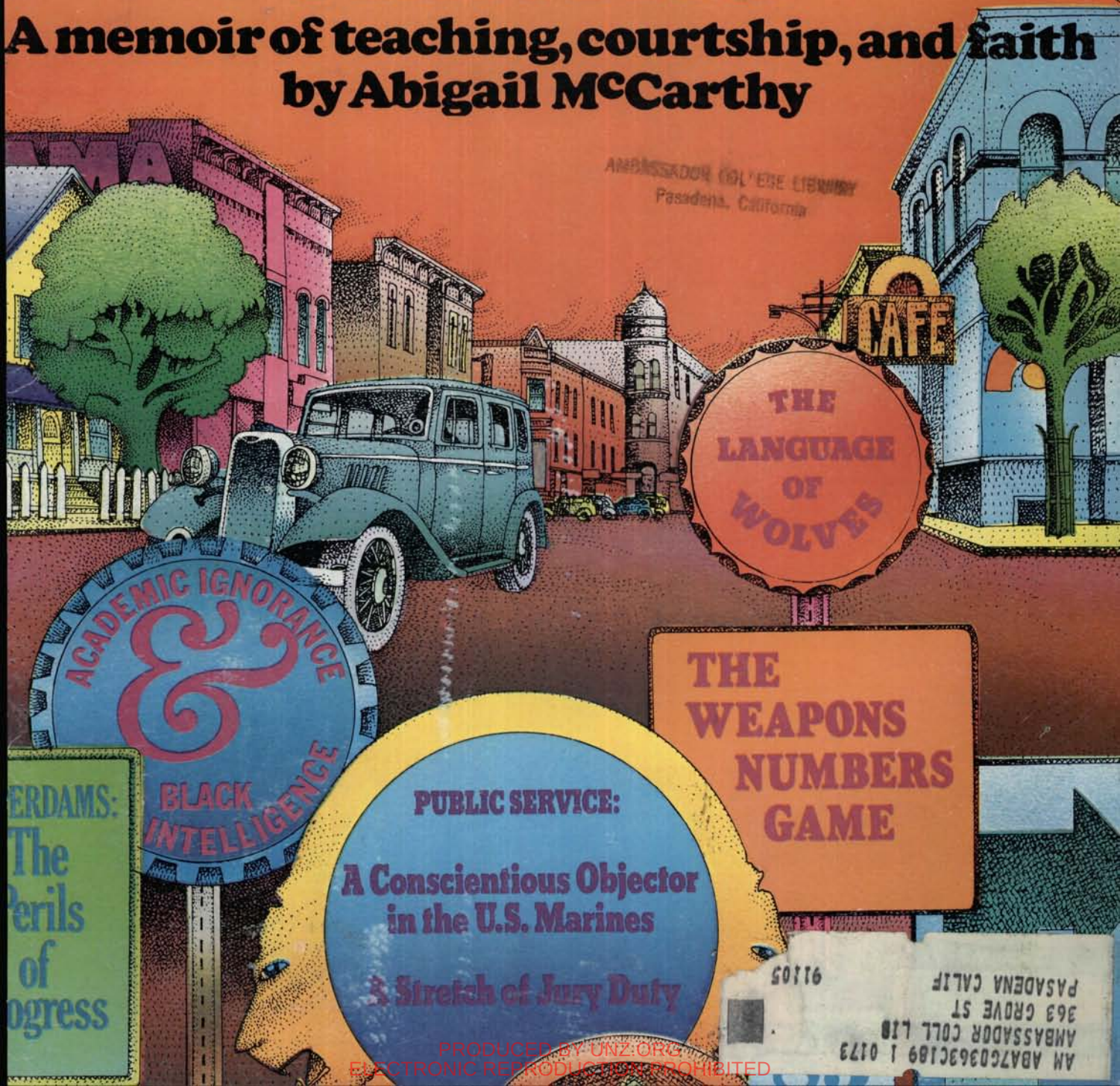

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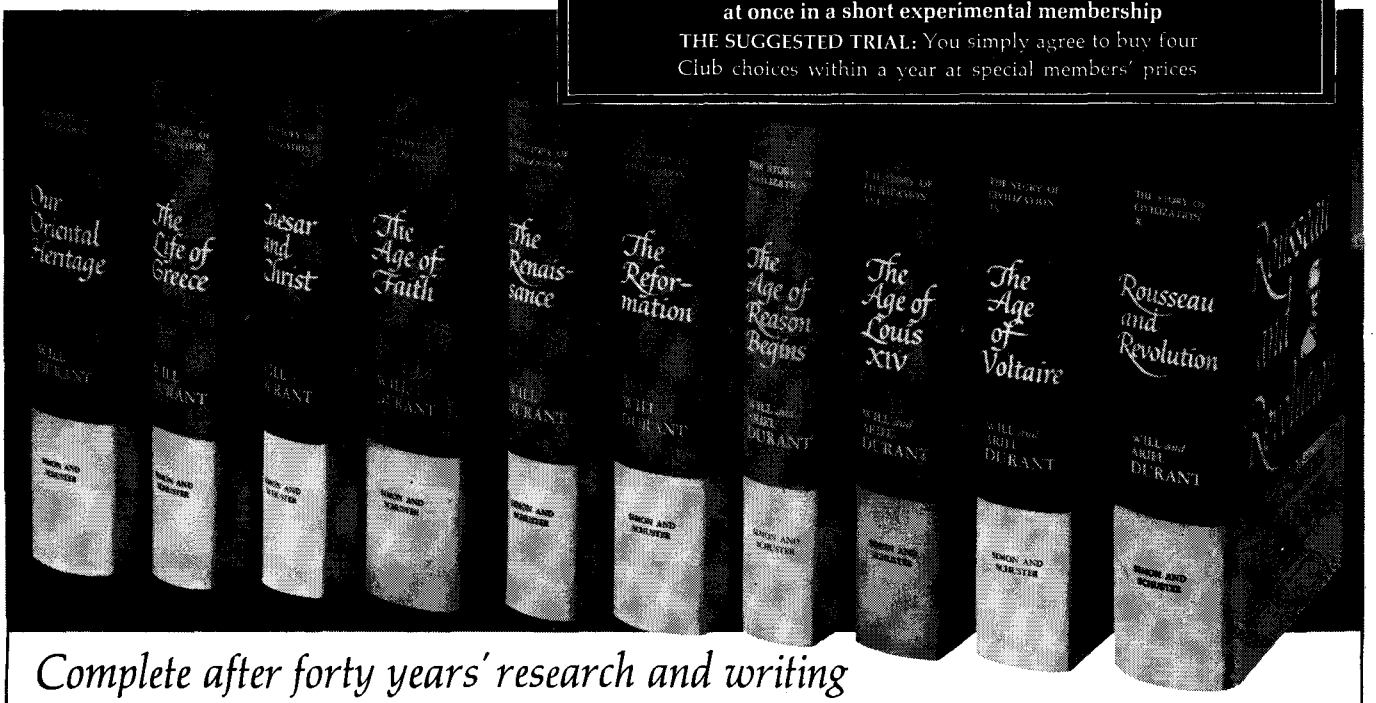

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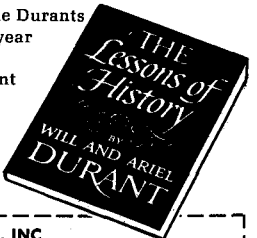

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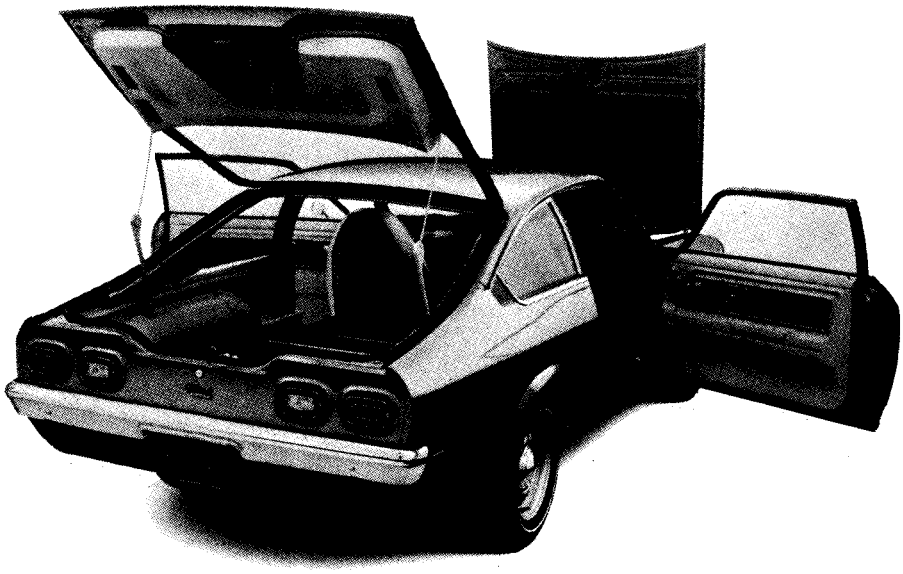

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THE EDITOR'S PAGE

Some recommended reading for the month of June:

THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD for Thursday, March 30, 1972, pp. 5244–5254. A lesson in civics. Arranged and directed by Senator William Proxmire (Democrat of Wisconsin), featuring the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, assorted other admirals, and memoranda writers. They tell the story of how more than $400 million of the taxpayers' money was declared to be "over target" and ordered (by Admiral Zumwalt) to be spent posthaste, so the congressmen who'd appropriated the money wouldn't think they'd been overgenerous to the Navy.

"The story . . . is about as devastating an indictment of service waste as I have ever heard—and I have heard plenty in the 15 years I have been in the Senate," says Senator Proxmire. It's a suspense story of sorts—if this is the way the admirals rush to get rid of the boodle before the fiscal year ends, what about the generals of the Army and the Air Force? No doubt the Senator from Wisconsin is already pressing that question.

IN A DARKNESS by James Wechsler, with Nancy F. Wechsler and Holly W. Karpf, a touching but disquieting book about the Wechslers' son Michael, whose ten years of mental illness ended with his suicide at twenty-six. Touching for what it shows of Michael's struggle and his family's loving efforts to help him; disquieting for what it tells of the arrogance, callousness, petty jealousies, and downright obtuseness the Wechslers encountered in Michael's association with eight different psychiatrists and three mental hospitals. An entire profession, of course, cannot be judged by one family's experience; there are many humane and compassionate men in the profession, perhaps even a saint or two. But the uncomfortable fact is that the Wechslers' experience was not by any means a unique one.

ANGLE OF REPOSE by Wallace Stegner, one of the best American novels in several years, and certainly one of the best of 1971—although one wouldn't know it from this April's National Book Awards, whose jurors didn't so much as mention the Stegner book, or from the New York *Times Book Review,* which (probably through accident or oversight rather than deliberateness) neglected to review it when it was published in the spring of 1971. The National Book Award fiction judges didn't do their homework. As a matter of fact, the whole NBA crowd—booksellers, publishers, et al—ought to feel pretty sheepish after this year's doings. The Awards were established to outshine, or at least equal, the Pulitzer Prizes, and to celebrate the vitality of American books and the achievement of American writers, but the judges couldn't find, or so they imply, a living writer of fiction or of history who deserved the prize, and the award for Contemporary Affairs went to a catalogue. Decisions like these can make the Pulitzer judges look good.

* * *

Speaking of awards, three more feathers are herewith stuck into the old cloth cap at 8 Arlington Street, Boston.

For the special supplement on "Work in America" in October, 1971, *The Atlantic* and five authors have won Sidney Hillman Prize Awards. Congratulations to Richard Todd of *The Atlantic,* Dr. Robert Coles, William Serrin, Carolyn See, and Kenneth Lasson (whose book *The Workers* is now in the bookstores).

For the two articles on China, "The 800,000,000," published last November and January, Ross Terrill and *The Atlantic* have been awarded the National Magazine Award for outstanding achievement in reporting excellence, and for the same articles Mr. Terrill now holds the George Polk Memorial Award for outstanding magazine reporting. This is the first time one magazine has won the National Magazine Award for reporting two years running. Last year's went to Ward Just's "Soldiers," which appeared in *The Atlantic* of October and November, 1970.

Robert Manning

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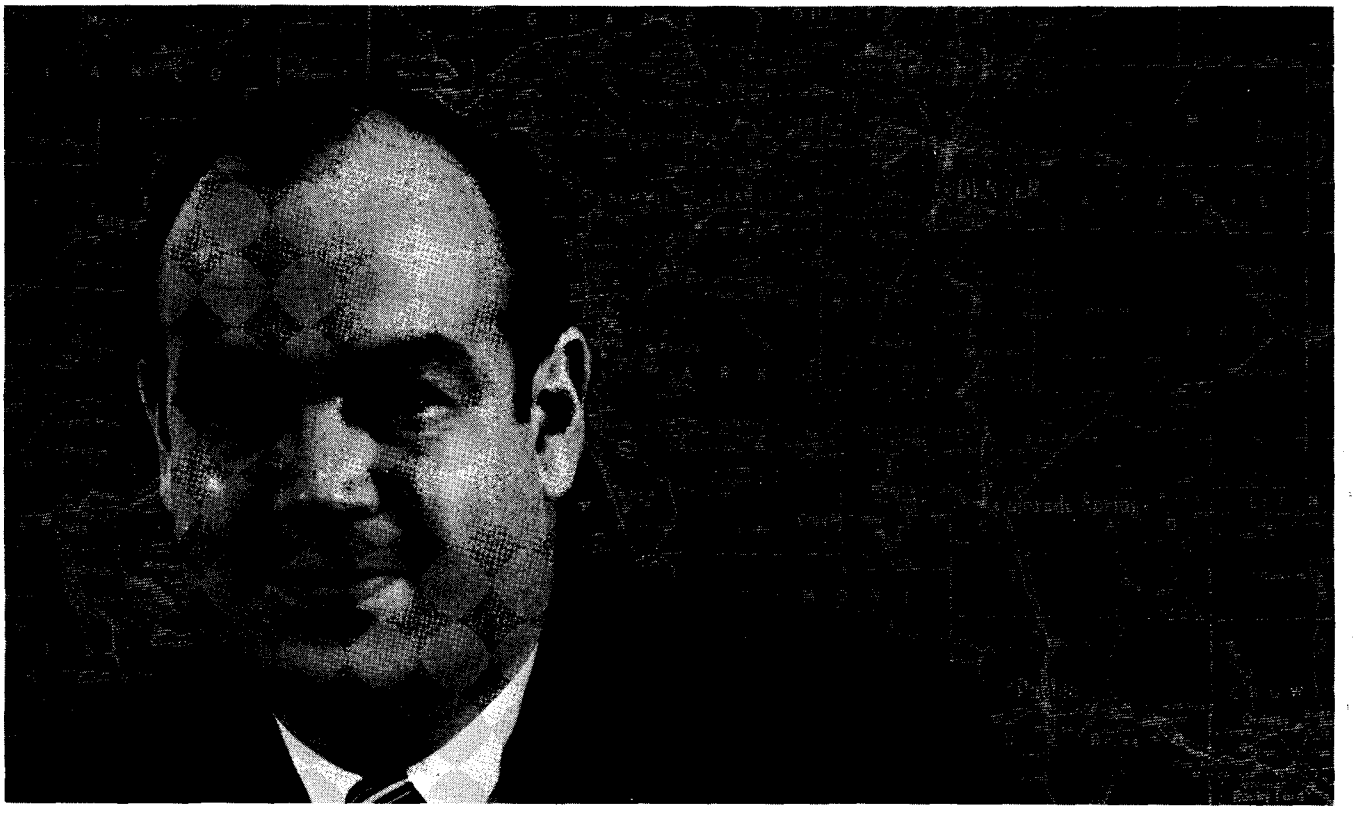

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REPORTS & COMMENT

THE WEAPONS DEBATE

"It is clear that the Russians are pushing ahead with their drive for overwhelming nuclear superiority over the United States. . . . Their build-up has gone so far that the United States cannot afford to play their game any longer."

This 1971 editorial from a leading Midwestern newspaper is representative of articles which have been appearing since then with growing frequency in the American press. Some refer to "Russia's frightening weapons momentum," "Russia's continued build-up of her strategic arsenal at an unprecedented rate," and "growing Soviet arms superiority." Others conclude that recent trends "indicate a real shift in the strategic balance from the United States to Russia," or that "we are in a position of extreme relative weakness and the gap is widening every day." The headlines are revealing:

RUSSIA ABUSED SALT TALKS
TO BUILD STRONGEST ARSENAL
WORLD HAS EVER SEEN

IS U.S. SKIDDING TO
SECOND-RATE STATUS?

SOVIET WEAPONRY
SURPASSES OURS

OUR SITUATION IS GRIM

Along with these articles has come a series of statements by private groups concerned about the shifting strategic arms balance. These articles and statements may look like a coordinated campaign, but the explanation is actually a good deal simpler: they reflect the honest concern of their authors over the growing Soviet missile buildup, a concern which is increasingly shared by many members of the Congress and other thoughtful observers.

These people are all reacting to the same basic fact: while the strategic arms limitation talks (SALT) have been going on, the Soviet Union has increased its land-based missile strength from 1190 intercontinental ballistic missiles at the end of 1969 to 1520 ICBM's at the end of 1971, which is about 500 more than the United States has. During the same period, Russia increased its submarine-based missiles from 240 to 500; it now has as many nuclear-powered missile submarines in operation or being built as the United States, whose undersea missile force has remained constant at 41 boats. As a result, the Soviet Union, which once lagged behind us, now has several hundred more long-range missiles than the United States. The kind of arms agreement which U.S. and Soviet leaders will likely conclude will not reverse this Soviet numerical advantage. That agreement will limit strategic arms competition in certain areas only, leaving it free to proceed in others.

What numbers count?

The concern which these facts cause is natural. But that concern needs to be reassessed in light of two other facts.

First, on purely technical grounds, these numbers do not give an accurate picture of the U.S.-Soviet strategic balance. The number of independently aimed warheads available to both sides is a better measure of their nuclear strength than the number of missiles, since it's the warheads, not the missiles, which strike targets. The United States is far ahead of the Soviet Union in developing multiple independently targeted warheads (MIRV's), and has been busy installing these warheads on both land-based and sea-based missiles. The Soviets are reported to be installing multiple warheads on some missiles, but these are not independently aimed, and so they are a lot less dangerous.

While the Soviets will eventually achieve the level of technology required to develop independently aimed multiple warheads, Defense Secretary Melvin Laird tells us in his latest annual report that they "probably have not tested MIRV missiles thus far." The result is that the United States has a large and growing advantage over the Soviets in warheads, and will probably keep that lead for several years.

Second, the size of both sides' strategic nuclear force has now reached the point at which it is not clear that marginal differences in numbers—whether of warheads or missiles—are of critical importance. In the 1950s, when neither side had what is now called "sufficiency," it was of considerable moment if one side pulled ahead of the other. But since then each side's strength has increased tremendously. When America's current program is completed, the U.S. submarine missile force alone will have over 5000 deliverable warheads; the U.S. strategic force as a whole will have over 10,000 deliverable warheads. When you're talking about this range of figures, marginal differences in numbers are no longer the heart of the matter. Each side can destroy the other, no matter

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In 1954, President Eisenhower proposed the Interstate Highway System. Two years later, Congress created that system, along with the present Federal highway program.

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The value of highways and of the Highway Trust Fund has been proved beyond question. America needs both.

Yet today some people deplore the money spent on highways. They infer that this is a subsidy—without mentioning that the money comes from taxes on people who use those roads. They would divert highway taxes to other purposes. At the expense of needed highways. At the expense of the meaning of "trust."

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who strikes first, and this is clear to all concerned.

But these considerations tend to get swallowed up in the debate. There is an instinctive tendency to focus on a clear and simple measure of the two sides' relative strength: the number of missiles that each has, and the megatonnage that they can deliver. This generates pressure to build up U.S. forces beyond the point of political and military need, at a time when budgetary resources are scarce. Just as important, it overshadows more crucial nuclear problems, which do not revolve around the relative size of U.S. and Soviet strategic forces.

There is some analogy here to the situation which existed in Europe before 1914. Germany then had a competition in ground forces going with France and with Russia, somewhat like the U.S.-Soviet competition in strategic forces today. Each country kept the size of its rival's army under close and anxious scrutiny. If that size increased, a costly parallel increase in the other's army followed. Military budgets rose steadily as a result.

And yet, when these countries found themselves on the brink of war in July, 1914, their actions in that crisis were not in the least influenced by the numerical balance between their armies. The chief military factor which made it difficult to resolve that crisis peacefully was not that France's standing army was larger than Germany's, or that Germany's reserve forces exceeded those of France, much less that Russia's army was larger than either of the other two, but rather that all these countries' war plans were so keyed to split-second mobilization schedules that each believed victory would accrue to whoever mobilized first. Hence each felt compelled to anticipate the other in making the transition from peace to war, even before the resources of diplomacy had been fully exhausted.

Nor was the numerical balance between these countries' armies decisive in the fighting that ensued. Initial victories of Germany and Russia at the frontiers in August, 1914, and these countries' defeats at the Marne and Tannenberg later in the summer, owed more to the armies' initial deployments, to the quality of their weapons (notably artillery), and to the failure of their services of supply than to any differences between their gross numbers.

Leaders on both sides would have managed better to keep the peace, and, failing that, to avert defeat, if they had worried more about these mobilization and technical problems and less about gross numbers. Today, as in 1914, important strategic problems need to be tackled if effective deterrence is to be maintained. Today, as in 1914, these problems do not have much to do with the most dramatic measure of strength: the numerical missile balance between the United States and the Soviet Union. So they get relatively short shrift in the press and in public debate.

What deters?

The first of these problems is this question: What types of weapons systems should be deployed to maintain stable deterrence? That deterrence now obtains; neither side sees advantage in being the first to strike in a nuclear exchange. Hence, even in a grave crisis, both sides are unlikely to resort to nuclear weapons. This situation could be altered if the Soviets scored both an offensive and a defensive breakthrough. An offensive breakthrough would mean developing either sufficiently accurate multiple missiles to destroy U.S. land-based missiles or sufficiently effective antisubmarine techniques to sink large numbers of U.S. missile-bearing submarines. A defensive breakthrough would mean deploying enough antiballistic missiles (ABM's) to blunt a reprisal by surviving U.S. sea-based and land-based forces. If both these breakthroughs occurred, it is at least conceivable that in a grave crisis the Russians might see some advantage in being the first to strike, and that the risk of nuclear war would be increased.

This danger will not be averted simply by expanding the scale of U.S. strategic forces. The danger depends more on the types of weapons available to both sides than on their numbers.

The best insurance against a Soviet *defensive* breakthrough is an arms control agreement which, among other things, so limits ABM's as to prevent effective ABM defense of missiles on Soviet territory. The agreement which U.S. and Soviet

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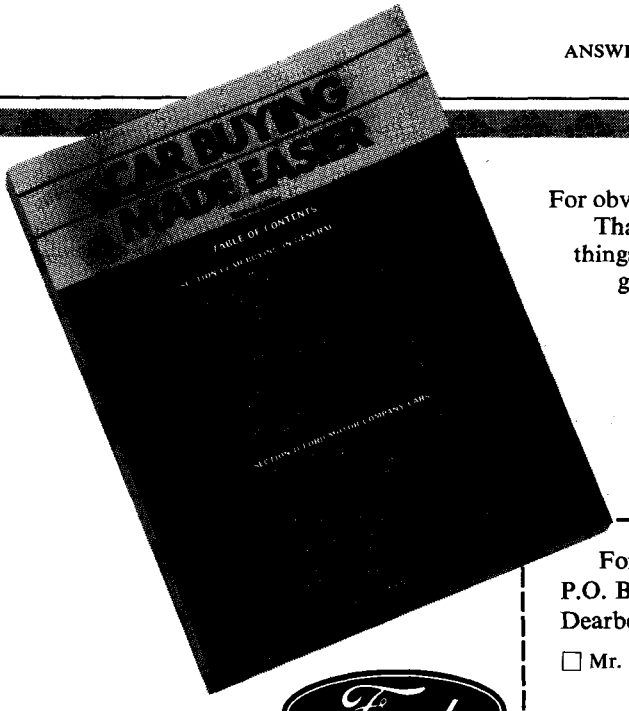

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leaders seem likely to conclude will have this effect.

The best way to prevent a Soviet *offensive* breakthrough is for the United States to maintain both an invulnerable submarine missile force and an effective land-based nuclear force; then the Soviets will realize that even if they can knock out one of these forces, they will have to contend with the other. The President has proposed several measures to this end: accelerating development of an improved missile submarine (ULMS), pressing ahead with a new manned bomber, and hardening U.S. missile sites. The purpose to which these proposals are addressed makes sense. The question is whether these measures are the best way of achieving that purpose: Should ULMS development proceed now, or should it be held back until a future Soviet antisubmarine threat emerges more clearly, so that the next generation of U.S. missile submarines can be geared more directly to that threat? Is the kind of manned bomber that the Administration has in mind the right successor to the B-52, or would a somewhat different and less expensive type of plane do the job? Is hardening of missile sites sufficiently effective to warrant the expense involved? Indeed, do we need land-based missiles as well as bombers to maintain the land-based component of the deterrent, or should the land-based deterrent consist only of bombers?

There are arguments on both sides of these questions; they cry out for debate. But these arguments involve technical judgments as to which weapons will provide the right mix of survivability and penetration, and thus contribute most to stability. And these sorts of questions are a lot less interesting than the one of gross numbers to both sides of the debate about the level of defense spending. Numbers can be dramatized in charts and slogans. Technical questions cannot.

Hence these questions are likely to receive less than their due in public debate. If they are scrutinized anywhere, it will be in congressional committees, particularly the Senate Armed Services Committee, which is becoming an increasingly effective forum for rigorous analysis of defense

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"I just got a disease nobody's supposed to get anymore."

Polio? Nobody's supposed to get polio anymore. Or measles or diphtheria, either.

Everybody knows we've licked these diseases and moved on to new problems.

Guess what, everybody. The old problems are coming back to bug us.

Reports indicate threats of epidemic polio and measles, especially in central city poverty areas and some rural areas.

Only 53% of children in the 1-4 age group in these areas have protection against measles. Only 54% have received adequate immunization against polio. And the figures for diphtheria? They are just as bad.

That's why we doctors of medicine, through our professional organization, the American Medical Association, have gone before Congress to call for new and expanded vaccination programs. We hate to see diseases we know we can prevent making a comeback.

Why are we taking a position on this legislation? Isn't that lobbying? Well, if it is, we do a lot of this kind of lobbying.

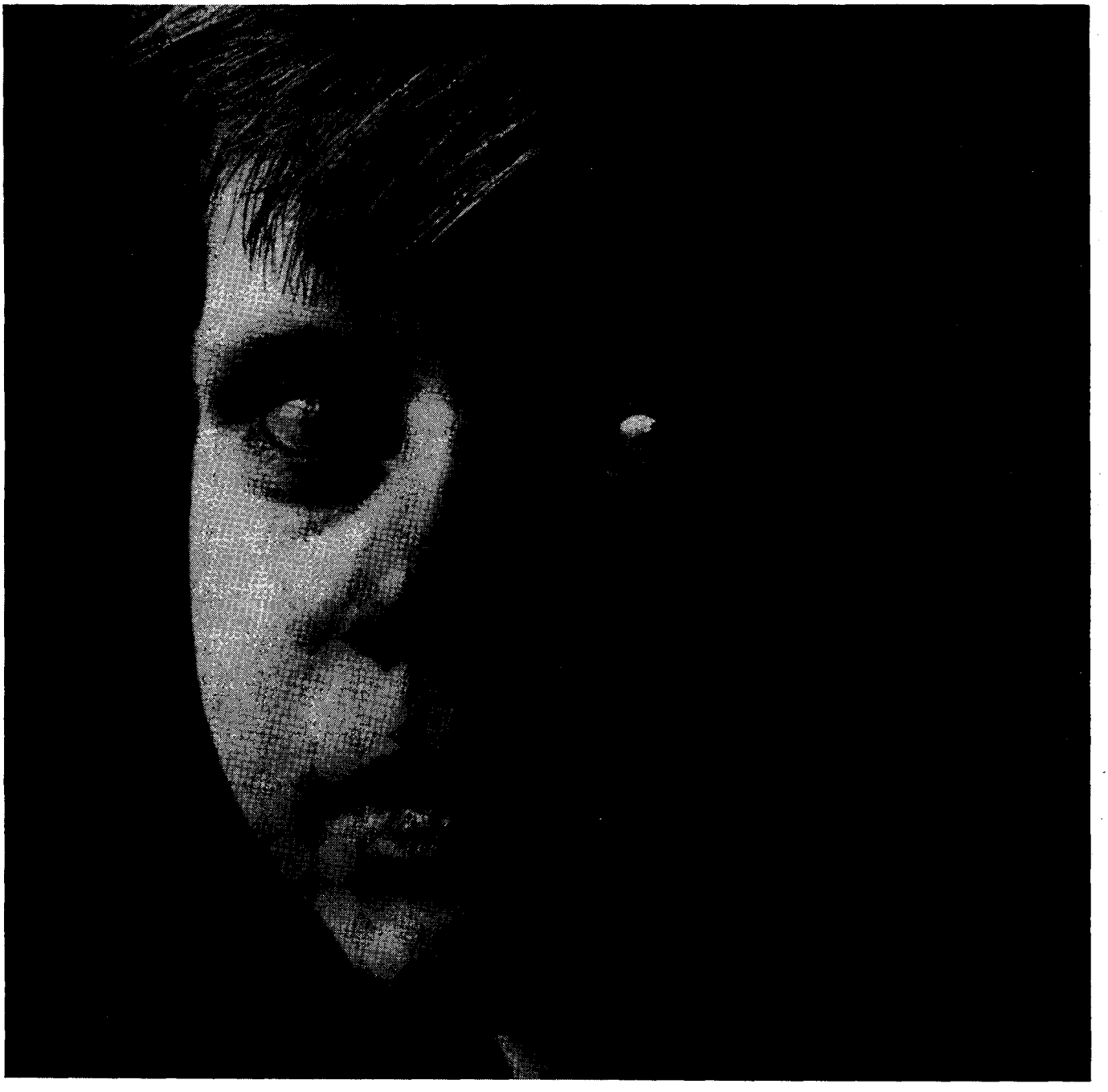
We've lobbied for clean air and water laws. For maternal and child care programs.

We've lobbied for programs to combat drug abuse and to rehabilitate addicts.

We've lobbied for more doctors. More medical schools.

We "lobby" because we must. If anybody should have a voice in this country's quality of health care, it's America's doctors of medicine.

If you would like to know more about where we stand, write for our pamphlet, WHERE DO WE STAND?, American Medical Association, Box W, 535 North Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois 60610.



America's Doctors of Medicine

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expenditures. The fact that the Committee's chairman, Senator John Stennis, Democrat of Mississippi, tends to avoid both the glorification and the denunciation of the military-industrial complex which dominate debate elsewhere makes it easier for him to focus effectively on issues which have little ideological content. In this type of forum, however, the question of what *kinds* of weapons are needed to prevent a Soviet defensive or offensive breakthrough will probably be lost to sight as a result of the general obsession with numbers.

Talk

The second problem is how to ensure that the U.S-Soviet strategic balance is not misjudged—in the United States, the Soviet Union, or the rest of the world. A widespread belief that the balance of effective nuclear power was tilting against the United States might encourage the Soviets to adopt more adventurous policies—for example, in the Middle East. Such a belief need not rest on objective fact. The missile gap of the late 1950s existed chiefly in Soviet claims and American doubts, but this did not make it any less important as part of the diplomatic landscape. Secretary Laird refers to this risk in his annual report. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, stressed it in congressional testimony. There is no evidence now that either the Soviets or our allies judge the United States to be in a position of nuclear inferiority. But this could change.

In the short term, the United States could talk itself into a state of assumed nuclear inferiority. The current domestic debate over numbers of missiles could have precisely this effect. Soviet leaders might conclude that American despondency offered tempting opportunities for Soviet pressure. The way to prevent this is not to spend a lot of money remedying an inferiority which does not exist, but to educate our people to the fact that it doesn't exist.

The President's report on foreign policy includes some sensible remarks to this end: "Capabilities of both the U.S. and U.S.S.R.," he says, "have reached a point where our programs need not be driven by fear of minor quantitative imbalances." But the educational impact of these remarks is drowned out by other parts of that report, and parts of Secretary Laird's annual report, which describe and stress the Soviet threat in terms of numbers of missiles. These passages seem to foreshadow a call for a substantial expansion of U.S. missile programs larger than the expansion recommended by the President in his current budget. At some point, this kind of expansion may be required. But the main need now, in U.S. debate, is less to trumpet this possibility than to educate Americans about the fairly wide range within which the *numerical size* of U.S. and Soviet nuclear programs can vary without decisively affecting the balance of power, and the technical issues of effective deterrence which need to be faced within this range.

The President finds it difficult to talk in this vein, however, without giving offense to those large numbers of Americans who are worried about the current U.S.-Soviet numerical balance. Moreover, he has probably calculated that Soviet leaders are more likely to negotiate a succession of arms control agreements if they expect that the United States might match increases in Russian strategic forces.

On this last point he may well be right: here, as in other areas of foreign policy, there is an inherent tension between the needs of candid education at home and of sophisticated bargaining abroad.

Over the longer run, a gap between American and Russian nuclear programs could develop which, even if it were not militarily decisive, would be so large as to shape attitudes of the Soviet Union, American allies, and perhaps the United States itself. This would probably occur only if the Soviets surpassed America not only in missiles but also in independently aimed and deliverable warheads, and if the resulting differences were very large. Given the current American lead in warheads, considerable time would have to elapse until this occurred. We can put this cushion of time to good use: after a partial U.S.-Soviet arms agreement this spring, we should seek a follow-up agreement which would limit other Soviet offensive weapons systems. If that agreement cannot be secured, and if Soviet strategic programs continue to escalate, that will be the time to expand our own programs.

All of which does not add up to a very impressive case for believing that the currently planned size of U.S. strategic nuclear forces is inadequate—or, indeed, that the size of these programs is the most useful measure of their adequacy. The current furor about numbers will have done a grave disservice to national security if it obscures this fact and thus diverts debate from more pressing problems of nuclear security.

—HENRY OWEN

ETHIOPIA

Several years ago, high in the medieval fortress city of Gondar, once the capital of Ethiopian emperors, I found myself in a poker game with an unusual assortment of Americans—three Peace Corps volunteers and a pair of U.S. Army Green Berets. Somehow, the game, with its clashing Americans, has always symbolized for me the double, contradictory role of American influence and involvement in the Ethiopia of Emperor Haile Selassie.

On one hand, the United States supports the traditional, authoritarian regime of the Emperor. American money helps him suppress a regional rebellion in Eritrea without his worrying about the grievances that cause it; and American money allows him to procrastinate as much as he likes in implementing the reforms that might modernize Ethiopia. At the same time, the United States, largely through its influence in education, has catalyzed revolutionary forces that threaten the authoritarianism of the Emperor, and may someday transform Ethiopia. This second role is largely accidental, and many American officials do not recognize it. Ironically, one immediate sign of it is a periodic outpouring of anti-Americanism from young Ethiopians.

The American connection

Ethiopia is a mountainous though fertile land of 24 million people on what is known as the Horn of Africa. It has always been unique in Africa, a Coptic Christian enclave rimmed by Islam; an independent empire untouched, except for the brief Italian occupation before World War II, by colonialism; a proud, Hamitic nation. In some ways, Ethiopia has been hurt

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by history. Its escape from colonialism has meant an escape from the schools, roads, and other services that came with colonialism. Its long independence has hardened traditional, feudal ways and made modernization more difficult than in those African societies that collapsed in the face of imperialism. On any measure of development, Ethiopia ranks near the bottom.

Ethiopia is a logical choice for American aid-givers trying to help and influence the Third World. Unlike most other countries in Africa, it does not have colonial ties to Britain or France to make it eligible for the cream of their aid programs. For this reason, it was an early favorite of President Truman's Point Four program. Since 1952, the United States has spent $300 million on economic assistance and more than $170 million on military assistance to Ethiopia. No other outsider gives Ethiopia more. With Liberia and Zaire, Ethiopia makes up a sort of American sphere of influence in Africa.

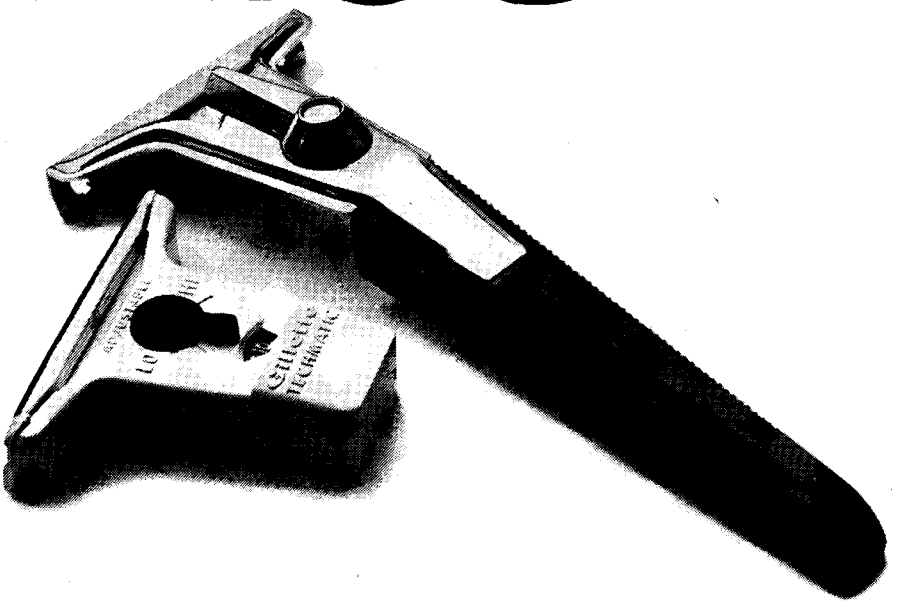
So far, the drastic cuts in foreign aid by Congress have not changed the AID program in Ethiopia. In time reduced appropriations may mean a reduced program in Ethiopia. But as long as American policy toward Ethiopia remains unchanged, Ethiopia is sure to remain a favored recipient of American aid in Africa. Other, less favored African countries will absorb more of the cuts than Ethiopia.

Some observers in Addis Ababa, in fact, believe that any future change in Ethiopia's dependence on American aid will stem less from Congress than from an attempt by Ethiopia to look elsewhere. The new year began with foreigners bemused by imperial, feudalistic Ethiopia's sudden friendship with China. After Emperor Haile Selassie visited Peking in October, 1971, China promised Ethiopia a long-term loan of $85 million. But Ethiopia has not drawn on it so far.

Ethiopia allows the United States to maintain its one remaining army base in Africa. As an American Embassy official said privately once, "The United States has paid rent for the base in the form of military assistance."

The U.S. Army base is the Kagnew communications station in Asmara in northern Ethiopia. Built on a 7500-foot plateau a thousand miles north of the Equator, the station exploits at-

Safety first.



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mospheric conditions that allow it to communicate with ease to the Mediterranean, the Middle East, Africa, and the Indian Ocean. Officially, its job is to relay messages to American diplomatic and military posts and ships at sea. In addition, it probably eavesdrops on foreign communications in the Middle East and the Russian-rimmed Black Sea. Army officers attach much value to Kagnew's services and insist that these cannot be duplicated elsewhere.

The United States established the station during World War II, when Asmara was in former Italian Eritrea. The first formal agreement with Ethiopia, giving the United States a twenty-five-year lease, was signed in 1953. A more important and secret agreement followed in 1960. Under this agreement, revealed for the first time at hearings of a Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee in 1970, the United States promised increased economic and military assistance for the right to enlarge the base.

"If we could get rid of Kagnew," Senator J. William Fulbright asked at the hearing, "it would just be normal relations there the same as with most countries?" David D. Newsom, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, replied, "I think that is correct. Yes, sir."

Anachronism

Kagnew's importance accounts in great part for the patience with which the U.S. government accepts the inertia of the Emperor. Haile Selassie is a small, seventy-nine-year-old man with a limp handshake, an almost inaudible voice, and a walk so stiff that his knees seem worked by a puppeteer's string. In the long reception room of his palace, the Emperor, with curled gray beard and crinkled brow, seems bewildered and lonely, receiving guests while his pet Chihuahua dogs scamper across the carpet. Yet a ruthless, shrewd, powerful personality must be hidden by his timid appearance, for he has ruled the Ethiopian Empire as Regent and Emperor for fifty-five years, a reign rivaled in history only by those of monarchs like Queen Victoria and Louis XIV.

Many American officials like to describe Haile Selassie as a great modernizer, but this characterization must be seen in perspective. In his long reign, the Emperor has broken the power of the nobility, changed the status of his people from serfs of feudal lords to subjects of the state, forged the beginnings of a centralized nation-state, and introduced Ethiopia to Western education. But critics maintain that he has been most zealous about reforms that strengthened his own power.

His style is an anachronism. A European on close personal terms with him said recently, "I dearly love and respect His Majesty, but when I see him stop by the hospital and hand out dollar bills to all those people outside, I tell myself it is time he went."

Rebellion

The limit on the Emperor's commitment to change shows in his lukewarm support of land reform, which has become the symbol of modernization to many young Ethiopians. He has allowed Parliament to sit on a moderate land-reform bill even though he has the authority to pressure Parliament into enacting anything he wants. "If this government can't enact this kind of bill," says a young, educated Ethiopian, "then what is the use of thinking of more radical reforms?"

The land-reform bill, in fact, has embarrassed the United States. Most other donors of aid believe that their agricultural development programs are endangered by Ethiopia's traditional, almost feudal sharecropping system, which turns over a sizable share of the profits to absentee landlords. The impoverished tenant has little incentive to improve his farming. Because of this, the Swedish government has informed the Ethiopian government that unless Parliament enacts a land-reform bill by July, 1972, the Swedes will end their economic assistance program. The United States has made no such threat, and in fact, is going ahead with a new agricultural development program. In private, American officials concede that they would never follow the course of the Swedish government even if they agreed that the land-reform bill was vital for the success of their agricultural project. Although they will not admit it, the rea-

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The Classical Dance

Madras, the least-Westernized of the four largest cities in India, is the cultural heart of the south and of India's classical dance, Bharat Natyam.

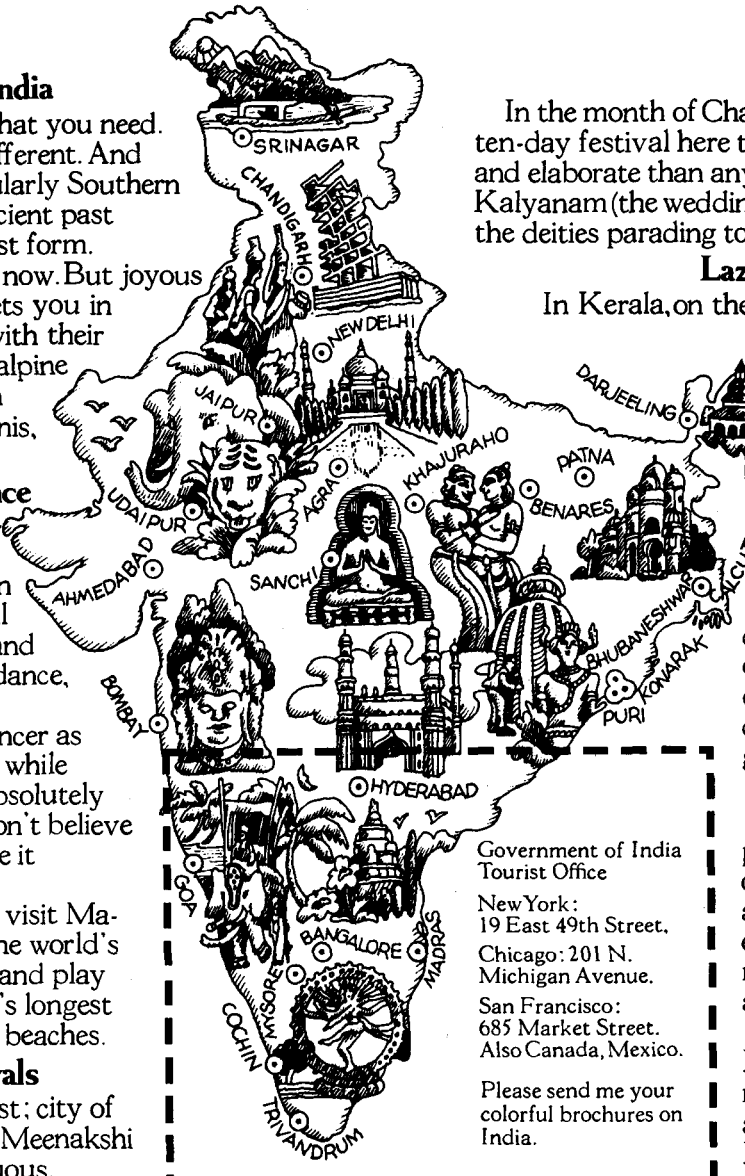
Film a young dancer as she moves her neck while keeping her head absolutely motionless. (You won't believe it unless you can see it again and again.)

Outside Madras, visit Mahabalipuram. See the world's largest stone frieze and play on one of the world's longest and most beautiful beaches.

City of Festivals

Madurai is a must; city of festivals, site of the Meenakshi temple and continuous, pleasant pandemonium.

Incarnations of several hundred deities from the Hindu pantheon look back at you from the temple walls.



In the month of Chaitra (April-May) there is a ten-day festival here that is perhaps more colorful and elaborate than any you've seen: Meenakshi Kalyanam (the wedding of the Goddess Meenakshi), the deities parading to trumpet and drum.

Lazy Safari

In Kerala, on the southwest coast, you can take what is probably the world's laziest safari.

The Periyar Game Sanctuary encircles a long lake, allowing you to lounge in a motor launch as it drifts around bends revealing elephant families bathing, and deer, bison, taking a refreshing drink. You may even catch a glimpse of a tiger.

Western Comforts

Here, then is one small part of India and just a few of its fascinating sights. All along the way there are excellent hotels, restaurants, modern transportation . . . and a million smiling faces.

This friendliness of the Indian people is what you are most likely to remember. In a survey taken about the Indian character, the one trait which polled the highest votes was hospitality.

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son is Kagnew. If the United States wants to keep the army base, it cannot threaten the Emperor with a loss of economic assistance.

The rebellion in Eritrea is another illustration of the failure of American aid. The rebellion is rooted in colonial history. Unlike the rest of Ethiopia, the northern province of Eritrea was colonized by the Italians in 1890, who named it after the Roman name for the Red Sea, Mare Erythraeum. The colonial experience made Eritreans better educated, more efficient, and better skilled than other Ethiopians. Eritrea has the best roads and largest industries in Ethiopia. All this makes the Eritreans chafe under the domination of the less sophisticated Amhara peoples in Addis Ababa.

After World War II, there was much debate about what to do with Eritrea. The British administered it after the war. In 1952 the United Nations turned it over to Ethiopia as "an autonomous unit federated with Ethiopia." But Emperor Haile Selassie dismantled the autonomy step by step. His government suppressed Eritrea's political parties and arrested political leaders and journalists. In 1962, a cowed Eritrean assembly voted for full union with Ethiopia. Eritrea became a province subservient to the rule of the Emperor and his Amhara administrators.

In 1961, dissident Eritreans formed a secret organization, the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF). The ELF has followed the usual pattern of guerrilla tactics in Africa. The rebels mine and blow up trains, railroad tracks, bridges, roads, gas trucks, and oil depots. They also hold up buses and trains in the countryside, levy taxes in the villages, intimidate progovernment Eritreans, ambush police patrols, and try to hijack planes.

Sometimes the United States is the target of the ELF. In January, 1971, the rebels killed an American soldier carrying mail from Masawa to Kagnew. In the last two years, they have kidnapped, held, and then released the American Consul General in Asmara, an American Peace Corps volunteer, and a team of photographers from *National Geographic.*

The ELF has grown bolder in the last few years, partly because of increased support from the Arab countries, which have armed and trained the 2000 to 5000 guerrillas. This support, however, has cost a heavy price. In exchange, the ELF has turned more Muslim in its thinking and propaganda, sometimes calling for an independent "Arab" Eritrea instead of an autonomous Eritrea. In the long run this could hurt the ELF, for Eritrea's two million people are divided—half Christian, half Muslim.

Outsiders who know Ethiopia well say that the rebellion can be quieted only if the government puts more of the administration of the province in the hands of Eritreans, provides an economic development program to make up for the economic consequences of the loss of Italian and British colonial capital, and eases the repressive measures of the army.

But Ethiopia disdains these kinds of reforms. "Talking to Ethiopians about the social causes of the Eritrean rebellion is like talking to General Custer about the social causes of the Indian wars," says a Western diplomat. For this, the United States bears part of the blame. By helping to create a large military establishment, the United States has helped lull Ethiopia into blinding itself to the grievances of Eritrea. Ethiopia employs much of the American arms and advice, including Green Berets who trained Ethiopians in counter-insurgency a few years ago, to meet the rebellion.

Nothing personal

American assistance has had a far different impact in the field of education. Ethiopia would hardly have a school system without the United States. The first 281 Peace Corps volunteers who arrived in 1962 doubled the number of degree-holding secondary school teachers in Ethiopia. Since then, 1500 Peace Corps volunteers have taught there. In the first five years, they outnumbered Ethiopian teachers in the secondary schools and made up from a third to a quarter of the faculties. For years, the Ministry of Education was laden with AID personnel. Haile Selassie I University, the only university in Addis Ababa, is practically an American enterprise, staffed heavily by Americans, most paid by either AID or the Ford Foundation.

The Americans do not teach rebellion, but students exposed to Americans absorb ideas that are revolutionary in a country like Ethiopia. Americans teach Ethiopian youngsters to think, to question, to examine, to create. They are admonished never to memorize by rote all that is put before them. They are taught to be skeptical.

It is no accident that the students are the only organized group in Ethiopia now openly questioning whether the Emperor and his old autocratic ways are holding up the development of Ethiopia. For three years, the school system has been disrupted by striking and demonstrating students who want a new regime.

The turmoil has been ironic for the United States. Although many Peace Corps volunteers sympathize with the sentiments of young Ethiopians, the students have often made the Peace Corps a prime target of their fury. In a mimeographed tract, for example, the university students insisted that "the teaching of English by the Peace Corps teachers is designed to effectively control the minds and attitudes of the youth in Ethiopia." Until the Peace Corps started to cut the number of its volunteers in Ethiopia a year ago, there were numerous instances of students roughing up and throwing rocks at their Peace Corps teachers. To the students, the volunteers were simply the most visible symbol of American support of the Emperor. Many students believed that the Emperor's regime would collapse without the economic and military assistance of the United States. After pelting volunteers with rocks, some students insisted that they meant nothing personal.

The Ethiopian response to student turmoil has been as heavy-handed as its response to the rebels in Eritrea. On December 29, 1969, the Emperor's Imperial Bodyguard stormed the campus of Haile Selassie University and shot and bayoneted students who had gathered to protest the murder of their student union president. University sources put the death toll at twenty. In May, 1971, police rounded up thousands of demonstrating students and kept them in detention camps for weeks.

In early 1970, Dr. Joseph Murphy, now president of Queens College, resigned as Peace Corps Director in Ethiopia, saying it made little sense

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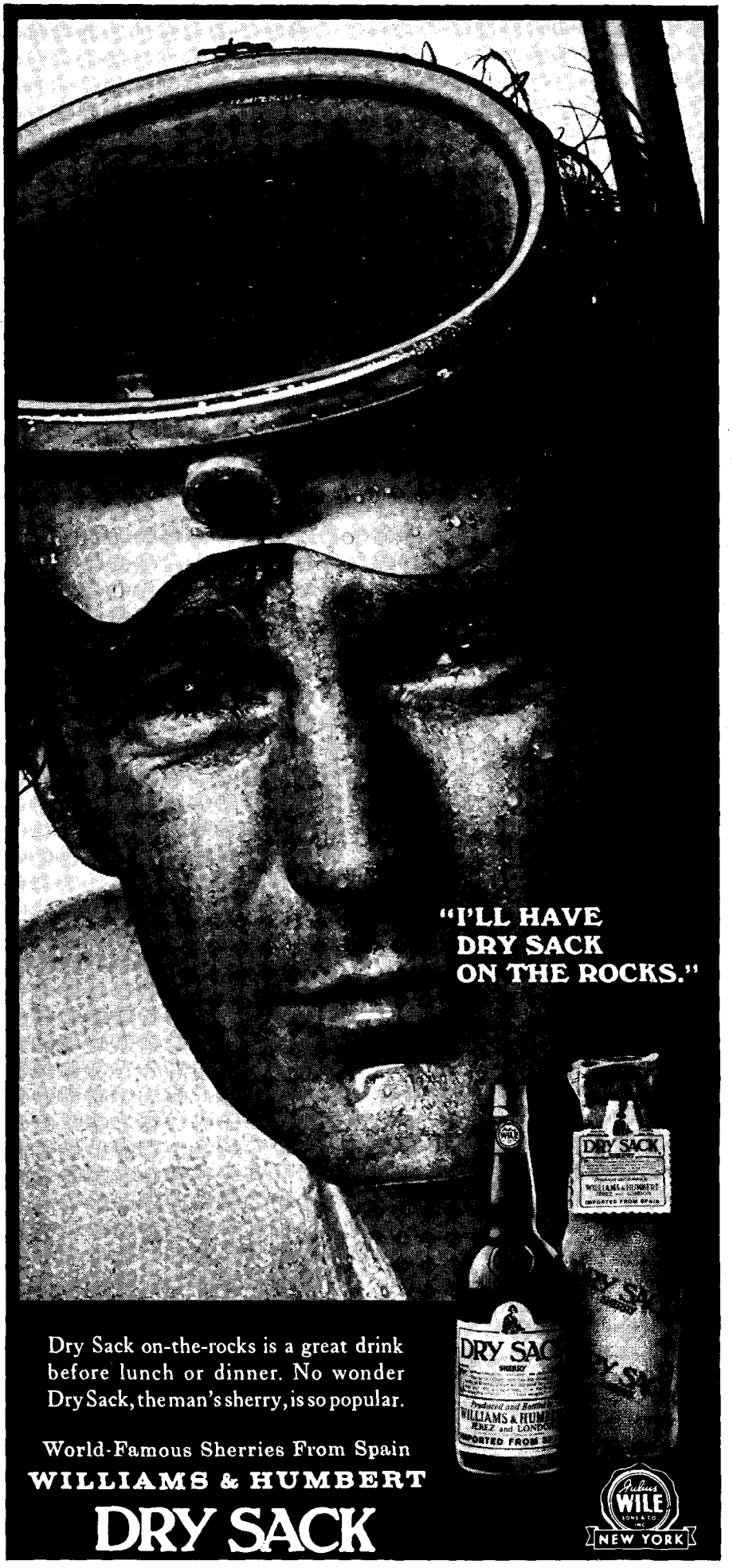
"to continue in a country which cannot establish a social order with better answers to its problems than shooting and beating young people." Many volunteers also resigned, and the Peace Corps was forced to scale down its program. But other American representatives in Ethiopia looked on the Peace Corps resignations and cuts as a peculiar Peace Corps problem unrelated to American policy in Ethiopia. They do not seem to feel that the American commitment to Ethiopia needs serious re-examination.

Such re-examination cannot come about as long as American assistance hinges on the Kagnew base. There is a good deal of disagreement about the necessity for Kagnew. Some State Department officials say that satellites or a new base in the Indian Ocean could take over the job of Kagnew. The Army disputes this. In a recent interview, Colonel Russell B. Jones, Jr., commander of Kagnew, said, "In the foreseeable future, I doubt that the job of Kagnew can be duplicated in the Indian Ocean, elsewhere in East Africa, or by Communications Satellite." But until the United States abandons Kagnew, its relationship with Ethiopia will remain abnormal.

—STANLEY MEISLER

A YEAR IN A WELSH SCHOOL

A year ago, while my husband and I taught English literature at the University College of North Wales, our three young children attended the Beaumaris Primary School in Anglesey, the Druid island opposite the northwest coast of Caernarvonshire, traditionally the last native stronghold against successive invasions of Britain. Beaumaris, a seaside resort on the Menai Straits just across from Bangor, the mainland university seat, has a winter population of fewer than 500, expanded slightly by students and university staff, like ourselves, renting summer cottages at winter prices; the primary school draws from several neighboring villages as well. The schoolchildren—about 75 in the Infant School (ages four to six) and about 150 in the Junior School (ages seven to ten)—come mainly from farming and working-class families,



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☐ If for a group, please specify_____
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You can "adopt" a child from any of the following countries: Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras, Hong Kong, India, Iran, Japan, Korea, Lebanon, Mexico, Nigeria, Paraguay, Peru, Syria, Thailand, U.S.A.—Appalachian children or American Indians. (Or a child of greatest need.) All gifts are fully tax deductible.

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with a sprinkling of professionals. Anglesey, which once had thriving copper mines and limestone quarries, now supports itself on agriculture, tourism, and the ferry trade to Ireland, with the few industries concentrated at Holyhead, on the further end of the island.

Like many Americans with school-age children, we had heard that British primary schools had undergone extraordinary changes in the past ten years or so. Still, Anglesey did not seem exactly modern to us after our first week, in which we discovered that the "public footpaths" crisscrossing the moors and farmlands are traveled by sheep as well as by the public; that unpasteurized milk from the local dairy was not only safe but the real thing; that ours was the only cottage on our road without a back privy; that on a Welsh Sunday there is no drinking, no entertainment, no ball-playing on the common. Ordinary life, indeed, seemed closer to the eighteenth than to the twentieth century. And we were, therefore, rather curious to see what kind of year the children had in store for them, and whether their education would model itself more on the reforms described in the government Plowden Report on the primary schools or on *David Copperfield.*

Immersion

The school turned out to be an attractive modern cement and glass building set on a hill overlooking a low-rent housing estate. The headmaster, John H. Smith, listened politely to my inquiries about the celebrated Leicestershire system and assured me genially that the school was run on progressive lines (no dress code, for instance), that he relied on persuasion rather than corporal punishment to maintain discipline, though caning was still permitted, and that the daily religious services—which, as a nonpracticing Jew I felt some qualms about—were ecumenical. We enrolled our six-year-old, Sara, in Upper Infants 2 (Mrs. E. Wrigley), David, aged eight, in Standard Two (Mr. E. Edwards), and Laura, aged ten, in Standard Four (Mr. A. Pritchard), and waited for them to "settle in," as the Welsh say.

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We soon realized that the school was very different not only from the American grade school but also from what we had been led to expect of the British system. For one thing, it was a Welsh not an English school. The practice varies from one Welsh county to the next, but in Anglesey all teachers must speak Welsh fluently, which for all practical purposes excludes the substantial English population from teaching appointments. One class was set aside for children whose primary language was Welsh, but all children, Welsh and English, had daily Welsh lessons—an effective means of preserving a minority culture.

The Welsh, especially in North Wales, are usually bilingual, which adds to the difficulty non-Welshmen, even of two or three generations' residence, have in learning the language. English is the language of government and business; without the cooperation of the schools, it seems reasonable to assume, the language would die out altogether.

Another difference more problematic for us was the pervasive Christian cast of public education. While the Anglicanism of English state schools is often perfunctory, Wales is God-fearing and chapel-going; the religious and moral functions of the schools are taken seriously, as I realized when I attended the annual harvest festival and heard the visiting canon address the little ones with terrifying words: "There are persons in this world, my children, nay, in this very town"—pausing to cast searching looks about the room—"who do not give thanks to God, persons swollen with their own importance"—dramatic pause—"persons who are not TRULY HUMBLE!" Still we did not ask to have the children excused from religious services, as we could have done. It seemed that a year's immersion in a Christian society could do no irreparable harm, and that exposure to one of the greatest of all ethical texts, whether presented as poetry, history, or divine revelation, was bound to be instructive. Besides, our culturally deprived children loved the hymns and Bible stories.

They loved everything, in fact, with the exception of the brussels sprouts. As their reports filtered in, I began to put together a picture of the school day.

Most children arrived at school by nine o'clock (the continual soccer game would have been in progress since eight); at 9:15 the school bell rang, lines formed—girls on one side, boys on the other—and they filed by classes into the Hall for morning assembly: Welsh and English hymns, Welsh and English prayers, and a Bible reading and ten-minute moral lesson, usually in English, occasionally in Welsh, by the headmaster. (One of his innovations was to have the service conducted from time to time by the children rather than by the staff, usually in the form of a dramatized Bible story, with narration and commentary—the medieval exemplum updated.) Children then filed quietly to their classrooms, where their basic subjects occupied the morning hours (English, maths, history, geography—combined as "Environmental Studies" by the younger teachers). In the afternoon they had nature studies or science, Welsh, sewing (for girls), music, art, physical training.

Free milk was served in the morning; a full hour was allowed for lunch. For one shilling and sixpence (18 cents) children could purchase a hot dinner consisting of a small portion of meat, mashed potatoes with an unidentifiable gravy, cabbage or brussels sprouts, and a sweet (pudding). (After the first week I received a note informing me that my two younger children were eating only the sweet and suggesting politely that they bring sandwiches from home.) School lasted until 3:45, with three fifteen-minute recesses, often supervised only by the older children, for teachers were jealous of their morning and afternoon breaks for tea. The lack of supervision at recess, indeed, was the chief issue at the first parent-teacher meeting in November; one mother tearfully protested that her eight-year-old boy had required psychiatric care as a result of merciless bullying on the playing field. I could only conclude that my children had been toughened by the fiercer competitiveness of the American playground, or that they were protected by their status as foreigners. David was safe, I knew, because of his expertise at soccer. And then they had some advantages as Americans. Laura, who had spent every recess since kindergarten in the school li-

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brary, came home one day ecstatic because the girls had begged her to show them American school games, which she had resourcefully invented on the spot.

The test of a school, of course, is what goes on inside the classroom, where I had no entry, at least not at first. The staff did not welcome parental visits; it was clearly assumed by everyone concerned—teachers, pupils, parents—that the child's education was the responsibility solely of the teacher. But the teacher *did* assume responsibility for educating the child, patiently and systematically taught each new class of infants to read, to write, to add and subtract, and sent them out at the age of eleven to secondary school fully competent in the basic school subjects.

After we returned, I tried to extract the pedagogical secrets of the Welsh school from my children. One thing I was sure about: the fact that half the teachers were male made a tremendous difference. The atmosphere was far less authoritarian than it tends to be when a school staff is exclusively male or female. And when a staff is mixed, it is much easier to recognize that primary-school teaching is a respectable profession for any intelligent and idealistic person, male or female, to pursue. The best liberal arts graduates, in fact, regularly go on to teach in state schools, usually after an additional year of teacher training. As for the actual classroom activity, the children simply claimed that they were never bored.

Why did they learn so much more? It seems to me that the teachers confidently expected that children could (and should) learn, and were therefore far more willing to teach. They assumed that learning is pleasurable, and that its pleasure includes the mastery of difficulties—a process which includes some pain and a large measure of guidance by adults. Whatever the reason, the Welsh school invariably set higher goals than its American counterpart, both in the teaching of basic skills and in their use to learn about what primary readers still call "the world we live in." The school had not adopted the most recent British innovations, like the open classroom, in which the general looseness of structure (the teacher does not teach, the child learns—at least according to most American reports); and it may be that we were simply witnessing the old method of British education in its most successful form. The staff considered themselves entirely modern, their classes free and individualized. Yet they were clearly not prepared to abandon techniques that had worked for generations of Welsh schoolchildren.

Good book

Of course these techniques, so natural to the Welsh, so elusive for the American schoolteacher, are not easily translatable from one culture to another. The staff appeared to have a great deal of freedom in teaching the basic skills, but one method was common to all: the central teaching tool was the Bible. Two or three times a week, in each class from Lower Infants (the five-year-olds) to Standard Four, the teacher would read a Bible story to the class, which the children would then rewrite in their own words, dramatize, illustrate, and discuss. My six-year-old's first composition had nothing to do with the "Summer Vacation"–"My Favorite Pet" genre (the injunction of every writing teacher: write about what you know!). It went thus:

> once there was a blind man he had been born blind and he had not seen his mother or father or brothers or his sisters and now he was old he could not get work because he could not see and he had to feel his way with his stick and he wore ragged close and he sat in the road and kind people gave him money and he could here their footsteps and he knew when children went by because they skiped and dansd one day he herd a lot of footsteps and he called out where are you going and one of the people in the crowd said Jesus is here the blind man had herd of Jesus and he took hold of his stick and stood up and called Jesus please help me but Jesus did not here so he called even louder Jesus please help me but Jesus still did not here and then he kept on calling and at last Jesus herd and he touched the blind mans eyes and the blind man could see and the first thing he saw was Jesuses kind face.

For this she received the comment "Very Good Work Sara" and a few hints on periods and capitals, promptly taken to heart.

It is hard to explain why the retelling of Bible stories should be such a successful method of achieving literacy, but it has something to do with the fact that children are natural mimics, natural teaching machines. They listen when they are read to, and incorporate into their own language and thinking anything that is repeated. The technique would be anathema in American public schools—not only the use of the Bible (for secular works could be substituted) but the device of requiring children to parrot in their own words mysteries beyond their experience or comprehension. Surely that is not the way to encourage creativity, self-expression. But in practice, every child in the class was using his native or adopted language to write coherent narratives with ethical significance. And his school reading was not limited to the childhood world of Dick and Jane, their pets, and shopping expeditions; it encompassed adult pastoral and heroic life, the experiences of poverty and faith, hard-heartedness, greed, and suffering. Furthermore, at the end of a year every child was literate, reading and writing on a level seldom reached after three years spent struggling through "programmed readers" in an American school.

The teachers supplemented the Bible readings in various ways. Mr. Edwards, for instance, a music-lover with a splendid baritone voice, played music to suggest themes for writing, and wrote on the board lists of words and phrases to include. A musical offering was David's inspiration for this composition:

> The Arabian knights are sneaking up on the Indians. Chingachook and his followers are aroused by the sound of horsehooves pounding on pebbles and the noise of horses neighing when they step on a cactus. They attack their attackers and it ends in a quiet, peaceful victory for the Indians.

Beethoven, no doubt. Mr. Pritchard, a youthful nature-lover, took the children to the woods and meadows of the Bulkeley estate behind the school to write precisely what they saw or felt. It was Mr. Pritchard who taught his pupils never to use the words "nice," or "interesting," or "very." (And it was Mr. Pritchard whose marriage was the social event of the year; the children reported af-

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7 cars for 7 brothers.

Wyatt paints Mother Nature. To carry his paints and canvases around with him, he needed a car with a large trunk. The Audi has the same amount of trunk space as the Lincoln Continental Mark IV. This amazed Wyatt since the Audi is much shorter than the Lincoln.

Bernard has a problem. Not only doesn't he take care of himself (a button missing here, a cuff link lost there), he doesn't take care of his car either. No wonder he wanted a car that gets the expert service of a Volkswagen. The Audi does because it's part of the VW organization. (Now if we could only get Bernard to take care of himself.)

Since Edgar has a big family (a boy, a girl, a wife, and a mother-in-law who likes to go for rides), he needed a car with lots of room. The Audi has just about the same headroom and legroom as the Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow. (Edgar sees a lot more of his mother-in-law now.)

Rolf is a first-class skier. He gets to where he's going because the Audi, like the Cadillac Eldorado, has front-wheel drive to give him the traction he needs to get through the snow to the snow.

Fishing, camping and taming the rapids are Duke's way of life. He wanted a car that could handle mountain roads and get him up to his cabin comfortably. Because the Audi has independent front suspension like the Aston Martin, Duke gets peace of mind as well as peace of body.

Meet Geoffrey the banker. To impress his associates, he wanted a car with a plush interior. Since the Audi's interior bears such an uncanny resemblance to that of the Mercedes-Benz 280SE, Geoffrey is now a Senior Vice-President.

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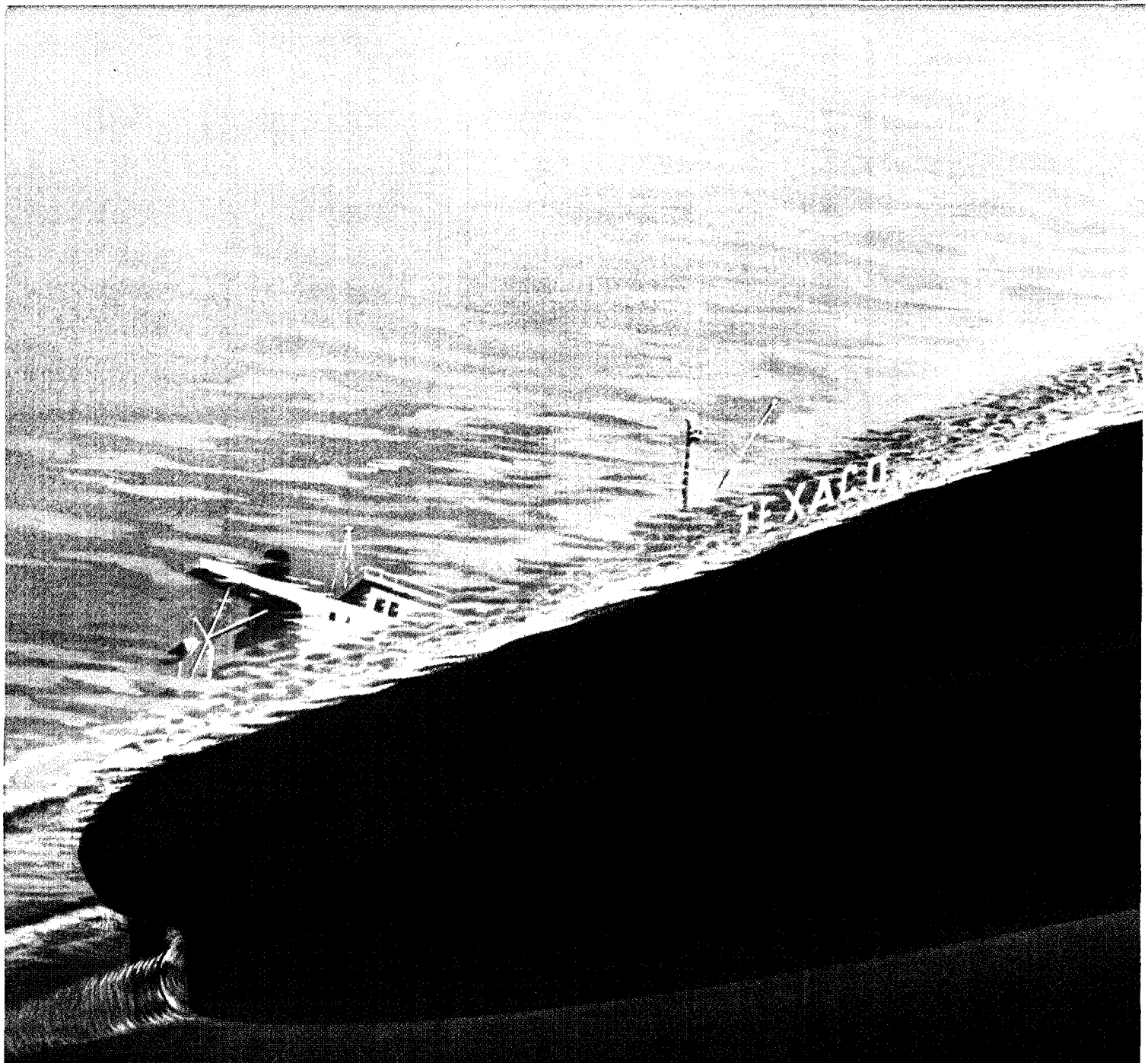

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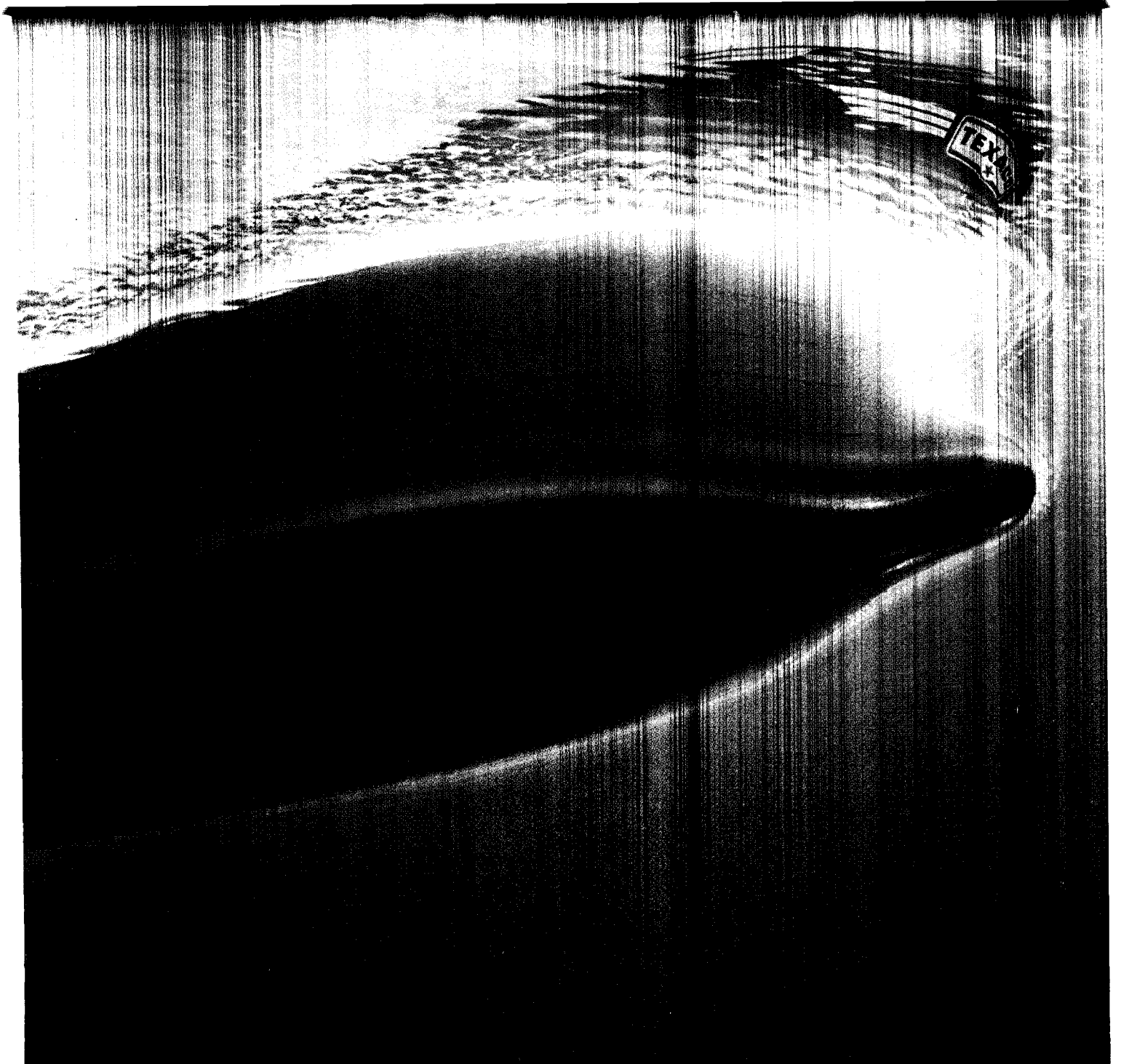

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To Dad,

This little bottle's here to say
you've made me what I am today.

Your stories of bankers, your stories
of kings, your stories of conglomerates,
they taught me things.

So today I'm rich, today I'm wiser.
But as this gift shows, Dad,
I'm not a miser.

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terward that they had actually seen Sir at the laundromat, washing underwear, shirts, sheets, towels, just like anyone else!)

There were other novelties for our children besides the Bible. For instance, they had the salutary experience of learning the multiplication tables, which had been abandoned somewhere in their American schooling in the enthusiastic switch from Old to New Math. The emphasis was plainly not on theory but on the practical use of math. Standard Two measured the school inside and out; Standard Four studied graphs by conducting a poll in the town on the newspapers residents read and graphing the results.

On paper

All the teachers made natural and easy use of the environment, especially the land. For nature study the children went into the woods and collected specimens of wild flowers, rocks, and ferns; or they went along the seafront and gathered snails, clams, mussels, and cockles for later dissection and pickling. For environmental studies they diagrammed various examples of housing: Beaumaris Castle; the George and Dragon, the oldest local inn; the Tudor Rose, a half-timbered private dwelling, *c.* 1450, now housing an antique shop. For art, Standard Four made a bas-relief of the Snowdon massif, visible on clear days from the school grounds. I had some sense of what this meant for my children when I asked them to write down what they remembered best about Wales, and Laura, now eleven, wrote about the hills beyond the town:

> We climbed through the barbed wire and dashed laughing through the pasture seeing the crisp green carpet of living grass flee by beneath us, seeing scraps of slightly bloodied wool torn from the sheep on the barbed wire fence, but mostly not seeing but feeling, feeling that this world was unending, that everywhere sheep and cows grazed calmly on the hillside and peace reigned. And it didn't matter what we did, and where we worked, we would always belong to the land and the land to us.

Sir would have approved.

What of teaching beyond the three R's? I looked through my children's notebooks recently, trying to figure out why they felt they were learning so much. (And here is another clue to a basic cultural difference: all school work is preserved in neat, ruled, dated notebooks. The complete record is there in pen and ink, for teacher or headmaster, child or parent to see.) The history topics for Standard Four seem pretty eclectic: "The Seven Wonders of the World," "The New Stone Age," "The Roman Citizen's Day," "Lord Shaftesbury," "The Slums of 1870," "Winter in the High Plains, U.S.A." Standard Two was evidently more systematic; David's notebook for "Environmental Studies" begins with "Arabs" and goes through "Red Indians," "Pygmies" ("The men are very strong and cruel. Instead of water they drink sap. They eat mice and rats. They can eat 60 bananas one after the other"), "Laplanders," to end mysteriously with "The Post Office" and "Frogs." One way or another the children seem to have acquired a good deal of miscellaneous information. I particularly treasure Laura's notes on a visit to Henllys Friary, a mile's walk from the school: "The main difference between a friar and a monk is that a monk spends his life up in the lonely places (mountains often) and prays, so that everyone may go to heaven. Many people think this a waste of time, preferring the life of the friars who work for all the poor and ill people." No grades appear in the notebooks, just the comments "Good," "V. Good," and "Excellent," with spelling and punctuation corrections. Very few one-word or one-sentence exercises, mainly essays, stories of two or three pages. I thought about the quantities of papers the children brought home from their American school: mimeographed instruction sheets, blanks to fill in with missing letters, words, one-sentence or one-paragraph answers to carefully directed questions, all of which go promptly into the wastebasket. And I realized that the Welsh school had no mimeograph machine, no public-address system, no secretarial staff, no teachers' aides, no team teaching. The teacher had to talk directly to the child; the child had to respond directly to the teacher.

I visited the school on the last day with an armload of American paperbacks for the class libraries. Our children had been asked to choose the Welsh and English hymns ("Ar hyd y nos"—"All through the night"—and "Jesus good above all other," their favorites). The hymns were followed by a dramatization of "A Vietnamese Family" by Standard Four. Laura played the grandmother; the plot involved a European doctor who heals a dying child and converts the family to Christianity. The narrator made a little speech at the end explaining that life was now very different in Vietnam, and asked the audience to pray for an end to the war. (Was this intended for us, I wondered—a thought to carry back to America!) The atmosphere in the school was just as the headmaster had described it the first day: "We try to run a happy school," he had said; and so it was. Our three seemed to fit right in. They spoke with a Welsh lilt, acquired two weeks after our arrival, addressed the teachers respectfully as "Miss" or "Sir," hid tuppenny sweets in their pockets, traded soccer cards endlessly. For a moment I ached with the longing that they might be allowed to grow up in such an environment: kind but disciplined, free within unquestioned limits, provincial, European.

We didn't stay, of course, but I often wonder whether, setting aside the Bible and the brussels sprouts, some of the methods of the Welsh school might not be adaptable to American needs—ways of using literature at a very early age to encourage fluency in writing and speaking, ways of making young children comfortable both with their natural environment and with their historic past. I suspect that our experience was not really atypical of British primary education; given the current interest in British practice, Americans should be able to find a use for this kind of precarious compromise.

—JUDITH CHERNAIK

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Innocent Bystander

Confessions of A Second-Class Citizen

by L. E. Sissman

I hate to admit it, but I'm one of a small, elect group of men and women in this country—maybe there are a thousand of us, all told—who are bound for oblivion on a one-way, nonstop ticket. Our crime against the state, or status quo, is that all of us have written one or more works of "serious" verse or fiction—that is, books that fall outside the pale of popularization by the mass media. Such books, no matter how objectively meritorious, are a positive offense to The Way Things Are; incapable of fitting into any of the usual pigeonholes of sensation or controversiality, they are rejected by the machine and cast into the outer darkness of unspeakableness, where, from the instant of publication, they are never spoken of again. Well, hardly ever.

A case in point, intended not to air a personal grievance but to exemplify what little magazines used to call "the writer's situation": my third book of verse was published fourteen months ago, in April, 1971. It got uniformly excellent reviews—from daily newspapers in Buffalo, N.Y., Boston, Mass., Richmond, Va., Long Beach, Calif., and as many as two other places. It was completely ignored by all the "important" review media, from *Publisher's Weekly* to the New York *Times* (daily *and* Sunday) and the *New York Review of Books* (which, to the best of my knowledge, reviewed fewer than a score of new books of American verse, and those mostly by supremely well established writers, during all of 1971). In spite of this, my book managed to sell a couple of thousand copies, a figure which is considered pretty good for a book of verse, thanks to my publisher's generosity in making both hard- and soft-cover editions available simultaneously. Still, this total is fairly pathetic when compared with the 10,000-copy sale of the average topical nonfiction title.

What goes on here? First, there are undoubtedly a lot of good new poets and novelists around; an old friend of mine, the former head of the English department at Buffalo, recently remarked that there are more good poets in this country today than at any previous time and place in history, and I'm sure this valid observation applies to novelists as well, not to mention the clever, growing band of young short-story writers. Second, and even more curious, there really is an audience for new poetry and fiction out there—an audience, I'd guess, that is larger than anybody has yet suspected. On college campuses there must be, at a conservative estimate, half a million students with a serious appetite for serious literature by unknown but promising poets and novelists. Among recent graduates and faculty members—people in their twenties and early thirties—there must be at least another half million. Say a million prospects, all told. Less than one half of one percent of the U.S. population, but still a formidable market. Why aren't the publishers and the book reviewers reaching them with news about new talent?

For several reasons. Though the publishers are reasonably willing to publish and take losses on new work—the ancient code of honor of their half-art, half-business compels the better houses to print a certain amount of literature beside the best sellers as a form of conscience money—the age-old customs of the trade have effectively stopped them from promoting it. Inasmuch as first novels and books of verse are considered "prestige" books, it is automatically assumed that they cannot sell. In other industries, such an assumption would not be made; instead, the people responsible for launching a new product would perform sufficient research to determine the size and whereabouts of its potential market before they made the decision to proceed.

By contrast, I have never heard of a book publisher investing a dime for research of any kind before launching a new book, or even a whole series of new books. I'd bet, for instance, that the highly praiseworthy program of Knopf "puppies"—a series of short novels by young, "undiscovered" writers—was undertaken without much more than an educated guess that it would be successful; I'll be surprised, and pleased, if Knopf corrects me on this statement. (Later: I stand uncorrected. Having checked with a spokesman at Knopf—a very progressive spokesman for what is regarded as a very progressive publishing house—I was not surprised to hear that no research preceded the launching of the "puppies." The reasons adduced by Knopf were (1) that advertising can't help sell books that won't sell anyway, (2) that a busy publisher often gets too close to the trees to stand back and look at the forest, (3) that you can't spend research money on books with an $800 advertising budget, and (4) since the New York *Times Book Review* is far and away the most effective advertising medium for selling books, the research would not provide a useful media alternative. There was also a tendency to laugh at my naïve suggestion that books, like other products, might benefit by research, or that there might be an unexplored alternative to the present mode of desultory, look-alike book advertising. I can't, at the moment, prove that I'm right, but I can't believe that a situation governed solely by trade convention should, or will, go eternally unchallenged. Think what might happen to the sale of verse and fiction by unknowns if, even without a penny of research or a substantial investment in advertising, a publisher were to make 10-minute tape cassettes of new authors reading from their own work available—free—to college radio stations, and to arrange college reading tours by these same writers.)

Historically, book publishers have always proceeded on intuition alone in deciding what would sell; in so doing, they have placed themselves at the mercy of the inscrutable marketplace, vastly overprinting books whose topical lure they have, gamblerlike, overestimated, cruelly underprinting "sleepers" for which, had they known it, there was a sizable and eager audience awaiting.

But the heaviest burden must rest on the reviewers. It used to be that the books with the heaviest advertising got the most reviews, on the old-

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line newspaper publisher's principle that ad revenue justifies editorial support. This is not so true today; most newspapers, with the exception of a few major metropolitan dailies, receive so little book advertising that their review activity is minimal. Either they engage a few local teachers, librarians, or their own staffers—who may range from highly literate to absolute zero—to write a once-a-week daily review and two or three on Sunday, or they employ a book editor who does it all himself, with equally variable results. But since the advertising category is negligible, most newspapers give the book page the shortest possible shrift.

This means that the publishers must look to the few national media that more or less conscientiously review books for whatever attention their first novels and books of verse may receive. Unfortunately, they will find that, when it comes to meritorious work by unknown writers, most of these influential media are unable or unwilling to do it justice. In the first place, of course, it would be utterly impossible for any medium to read all the potentially worthy new work published each year and then report on the best of it. Nearly 40,000 new trade books are published in a given year, of which a very high proportion must be evanescent trash; nevertheless, even the *Times,* which manages to review some 3000 books a year in its daily and Sunday pages, still misses many first-rate titles by new authors. But there are many other and more subtle pressures on the reviewer; for one thing, the few book pages or book sections that still carry sizable amounts of book advertising may feel that the books thus advertised—the "big" books of the season, at least in terms of sales—may justify a review, either because the advertiser expects it or, perversely, because the new best seller deserves to be put down (thus enhancing the publication's, and the reviewer's, reputation for literary purity and/or incorruptibility). A recent example: one of the daily reviewers of the New York *Times* was so conscious of this tendency to demolish big, popular names that he devoted an entire column to a kidding discussion of how best to put down Irving Wallace's new novel, *The Word.* But isn't the best way to dismiss such a book simply to ignore it, and to devote the space instead to a good book by somebody the reader never heard of?

On the newsmagazines, the reviewer's problem is often further confounded by (1) the pressure on his little space by the news-minded front-of-the-book editors, and (2) their desire for a bright, flippant homogeneity throughout the magazine. Thus, they will not look kindly on a long, serious review of an unknown; they'd rather see a wicked, witty knifing of some fat target of opportunity (poor Mr. Wallace again) or a lyric celebration of the Big New Name of the Season (since reviewers, for all their restrictions, are still expected to discover talent, they sometimes take the safest way by jumping, three or four times a year, on a bandwagon somebody else has started). The Big New Names suffer from this sudden celebrity; early overpraise can be damaging to their second books, which will often be dismissed as untrue to their authors' early promise by the very critics who discovered them.

Another problem is the dearth of trained reviewers. In England, a large cadre of literate critics keeps the weeklies—the *TLS,* the *New Statesman,* the *Spectator,* and the Sunday papers—filled with lively, able, well-written criticism of worthwhile books; in this country, those publications which carry the largest number of reviews often have to fall back on young, untried academics who are likely to savage their elders and betters—a classic example was the arrogant dismissal of Saul Bellow's *Mr. Sammler's Planet* by a young English professor in the New York *Times Book Review*—since they tend to reserve the senior, well-established critics for front-page reviews of big, "important" books by equally established writers. (Though the Bellow book should, by rights, have been considered "important" and deserving of a page-one review by a first-rank critic, one wonders what editorial accident or animus led to this unfortunate result.) This is a little tragedy in itself; our best-equipped critics should be encouraged to devote at least a part of their reviewing time to the discovery and celebration of genuine new talent, and publications of the prestige of the *Times Book Review* or the *New York Review of Books* should be capable of establishing a regular department in which new work is given the attention it so desperately needs.

A third problem—the mention of the *New York Review* brings it up sharply—is the *politicization* of book reviewing today. We are living, indeed, in times of almost apocalyptic change, and books that plumb that change, its course, speed, and direction, deserve serious and comprehensive coverage; but surely this should not occur at the expense of literature, and surely many marginal or derivative books on politics are not worthy of the extensive attention they now receive. This problem is exacerbated by the tendency of many excellent critics to man the ideological barricades in print, laying aside irrelevant things—great verse and fiction—until the battle shall be won.

Finally, there is the problem of *literary* politics. Much has been said on that subject, most of it true; I'll simply content myself with observing that American literature has an Old Boy Network that would put England's to shame, and that Old Boys are by definition inimical to Young Boys, unless they be Protégés.

It is a sad mess. But there are remedies. A number of the larger book publishers have, for better or worse, been taken over by still larger communications companies in recent years. These companies market their products and services in a more or less ordered, rational, and accountable way; it is to be expected that they will supplant the old seat-of-the-pants marketing methods of the publishers with more modern techniques of research and product planning. This could, of course, have the negative effect of ending the publication of all poor-selling books, irrespective of their literary merit; it is more likely, I devoutly hope, to discover the waiting audience for works of literature and begin to tap it in earnest. And if and when publishers begin to back serious verse and fiction with advertising and publicity to bring it to the attention of its natural prospects in the colleges and the cities, I believe the book-review media will take the point and increase their attention to new work, too.

In fact, I think the change may even come in my own lifetime. When my sixth, and final, book of verse, *Seven Last Words,* is published, I confidently predict that it will be reviewed in the *Times* and will sell 10,000 copies. But that, of course, won't be till 1984.

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THE MAIL

GHOSTS OF NUREMBERG

SIR: I read with great interest the colorful article by former Nuremberg interrogator Philipp Fehl ("The Ghosts of Nuremberg," March *Atlantic*). I am participating, even now, in trials held in Germany against mass murderers of the Jews, Catholics, and political enemies of the Nazi regime. In my present role as friend of the prosecution *(Nebenkläger)* and representative of the relatives of the murdered victims, I am using every day the research and the interrogations done so thoroughly at Nuremberg.

May I rectify an error in Mr. Fehl's article. The British chief prosecutor, Sir Hartley Shawcross, had nothing whatsoever to do with the cross-examination of the chief defendant, Hermann Göring. Göring was cross-examined by Sir David Maxwell Fife, the British deputy chief prosecutor, to whom Mr. Fehl's praise should be directed. Sir Hartley Shawcross, at that time the Attorney General in London, was only in Nuremberg a few days; he delivered an excellent opening and final speech, but the main burden of the British prosecution was in the hands of Sir David Maxwell Fife.

I don't share Fehl's judgment that Göring was a *condottiere* or a Borgia rather than a Nazi. I knew Göring very well—since the early thirties—and interrogated him in Nuremberg intensively. He was a dyed-in-the-wool Nazi, and in my judgment he hated the Jews from the bottom of his heart. He felt unhappy, and had an inferiority complex, possibly because his godfather, Hermann von Eppenstein, who raised him, was of Jewish descent. Göring's *condottiere* bonhomie was nothing more than a mask.

Finally, the Russian prosecutor, Roman Andreevich Rudenko, was in no way a "macabre bookkeeper," as Mr. Fehl suggests. Rudenko was an excellent jurist, highly educated, aggressive, and very well versed in the field of Nazi crimes. The fact that he has been prosecutor general of the U.D.S.S.R. for about two decades speaks for his management qualities rather than for a bookkeeping soul.

DR. ROBERT M. W. KEMPNER
U.S. Deputy Chief Prosecutor
at the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials

Philipp Fehl replies:

I'm sorry if I erred in recollecting a spirited exchange of wit (if that is the word) between Sir Hartley Shawcross and Hermann Göring. The effect of Sir Hartley in court is certainly unforgettable and I do stick to my description of it, but contrary to Mr. Kempner's assumption, I did not mean to praise either Sir Hartley or the effect—I was merely describing what I saw and noted with a sense of wonder.

Sir David Maxwell-Fyfe (not *Fife*) was a lawyer of quite different temperament, cautious, circumspect, and, in his manner, I thought, fragile. Too much, I believe, has been made of the moment during Göring's cross-examination to which Mr. Kempner alludes, in which, as some said at the time, "Maxwell-Fyfe really gave it to Göring!" Perhaps the prosecution's self-congratulatory glee compensated for the misery of Göring's having been able to best Justice Jackson in the game of repartee to which I refer in my article.

What can I or anyone else really say of the measure of Göring's monstrosity? It will certainly not help here to speak of an "inferiority complex." I found Göring thoroughly frightening, and as impressive as ever evil can be, not a party ideologue by any standard, not even in his attitude toward Jews, even though, as everybody knows, and as Mr. Kempner points out again, he was a prime mover in the initiation and pursuit of their mass murder.

Regarding the Russian prosecutor Roman Rudenko, the less said the better. His speech is on record. I believe I reported correctly on his manner of delivery. I entertain no doubt of his ability as an administrator, but in order to assess him as a man (not to speak of as a colleague in the prosecution of war crimes), it would seem inevitable that one consider the masters and the system he served so successfully. The trials were, from the beginning, flawed by the fact that the Russians—who, together with the Germans, had plotted the invasion of Poland and its division among themselves—were now sitting as judges and prosecutors in the trial of the Germans for plotting and waging aggressive war. There was, furthermore, the debacle of the Russians' self-righteous insistence on prosecuting the Germans for the mass murder of Polish prisoners of war in the forest of Katyn. The Germans, some time after their invasion of Russia, pinned this massacre upon the Russians, and the Russians at Nuremberg returned the compliment, when it was so desperately obvious that either party might have committed the outrage, and the discussion of the evidence seemed to point out the Russians as the guilty party.

ANAÏS NIN'S DIARY

SIR: Gerald Clarke's article on Gore Vidal ("Petronius Americanus," March *Atlantic*) was interesting, but I find his comments about diarist Anaïs Nin a bit off the mark.

Referring to the recent portrait of Vidal which appeared in Volume IV

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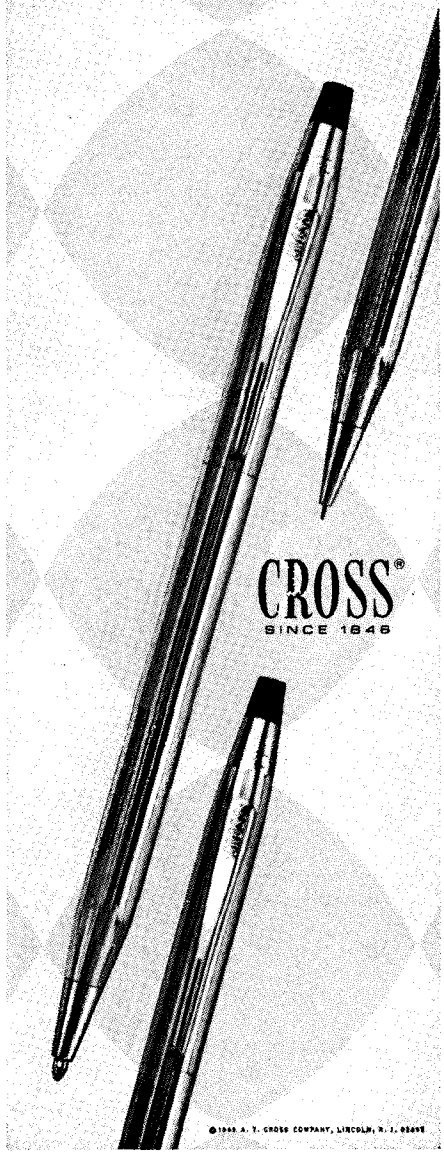

of Miss Nin's *Diary,* Mr. Clarke writes that "nobody much likes laying his adolescent traumas before the public" and that Vidal "smarts a little at the mention of novelist Anaïs Nin." Mr. Vidal had ample opportunity to edit the portrait of himself that appeared. In a review of the Diary for the Los Angeles *Times,* Mr. Vidal claims to have cut a couple of fine "warts" from the Diary segment that concerned him. Wouldn't it have been just as easy to edit the adolescent sections? If Mr. Vidal is "smarting," he is doing so at his own calling.

Mr. Clarke's statement that Miss Nin is "indiscreet" and that her destiny is "to love famous artists so that she can put them down in her diary" is absurd. Who would have dared guess in the thirties that Henry Miller, Lawrence Durrell, or Antonin Artaud would one day become famous, let alone Gore Vidal in his late teens?

In *The Novel of the Future,* Miss Nin speaks for herself: "I do not practice a ruthless invasion. I take delight in the creative possibilities of the intimate portrait, but it has to be with the collaboration of the sitter . . . if a man is big enough, he can support a few frailties."

DAVID THOMAS
Missoula, Mont.

BLUEGRASS

SIR: Robert Cantwell's "Believing in Bluegrass" (March *Atlantic*) is probably the finest—definitely the most sophisticated and observant—résumé of the spirit of bluegrass that I have ever seen in a national magazine.

TONY C. WILLIAMSON
The Green Valley Ramblers
Chapel Hill, N. C.

SIR: I want to thank you for the bluegrass article by Robert Cantwell, as he didn't make fun of bluegrass music and of country people. And it sounded like he knew something about it.

ZELDA PARSONS
Fairfax, Va.

SIR: "Believing in Bluegrass" in your March issue by Robert Cantwell is probably the best ever written about this music.

EBO WALKER
New Grass Revival
Louisville, Ky.

SIR: After reading Robert Cantwell's article, I hurried off to our local record store and plunked down $4.45 for a current Bill Monroe recording. Monroe's technique, requiring superb instrumental dexterity, seemed wasted repeating the same six or eight bars.

As an indigenous American art form, bluegrass has value to the social anthropologist. But to equate bluegrass with Leadbelly or Bessie Smith, or jazz, for that matter, is hearing it through rose-colored ears.

KENNETH J. RAWSON
New York City

SIR: *The Atlantic* is to be congratulated for publishing Robert Cantwell's "Believing in Bluegrass." Of particular importance is the author's judgment of Bill Monroe.

American music has not produced many geniuses; Monroe, with his ethereal high voice and instrumental virtuosity, should be discussed in the same context as an Ives or a Ruggles.

MARK A. YACOVONE
Chevy Chase, Md.

SIR: I wish to thank you for a beautiful article about the music I love and the people who play it.

Those of us who know bluegrass hope that someday America will listen . . . and when that day comes . . . I think people will be astonished at what they hear.

PAT AHRENS
Columbia, S. C.

SIR: Robert Cantwell understands bluegrass and is able to touch the essence of our cherished heritage.

On one point he is wrong, though. He assumes that the mountain people may turn their backs on their heritage as they are assimilated into the mainstream of American society. We are in the mainstream of American society! All the mountain people I have ever known feel very American and very equal to other Americans. We also feel, however, that we have something special. Unlike many of our contemporaries, we know who we are, and most of us who leave our homelands cherish our heritage even more than those who stay. We find no comparable replacement. Consequently, we stubbornly defend and preserve our music.

MARY WILLIAMSON
Wyandotte, Mich.

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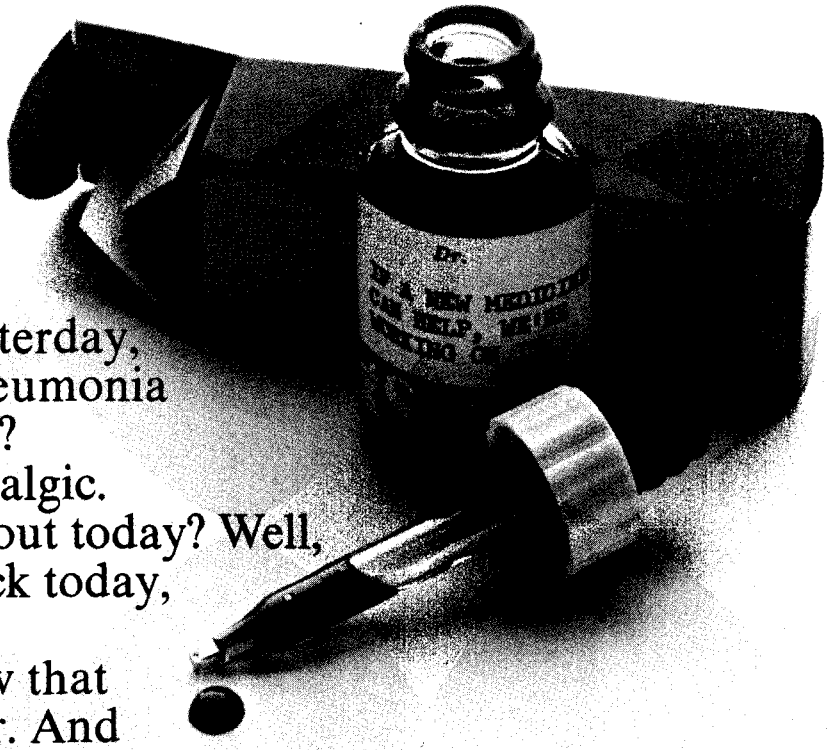
Thank God for tomorrow's medicine.



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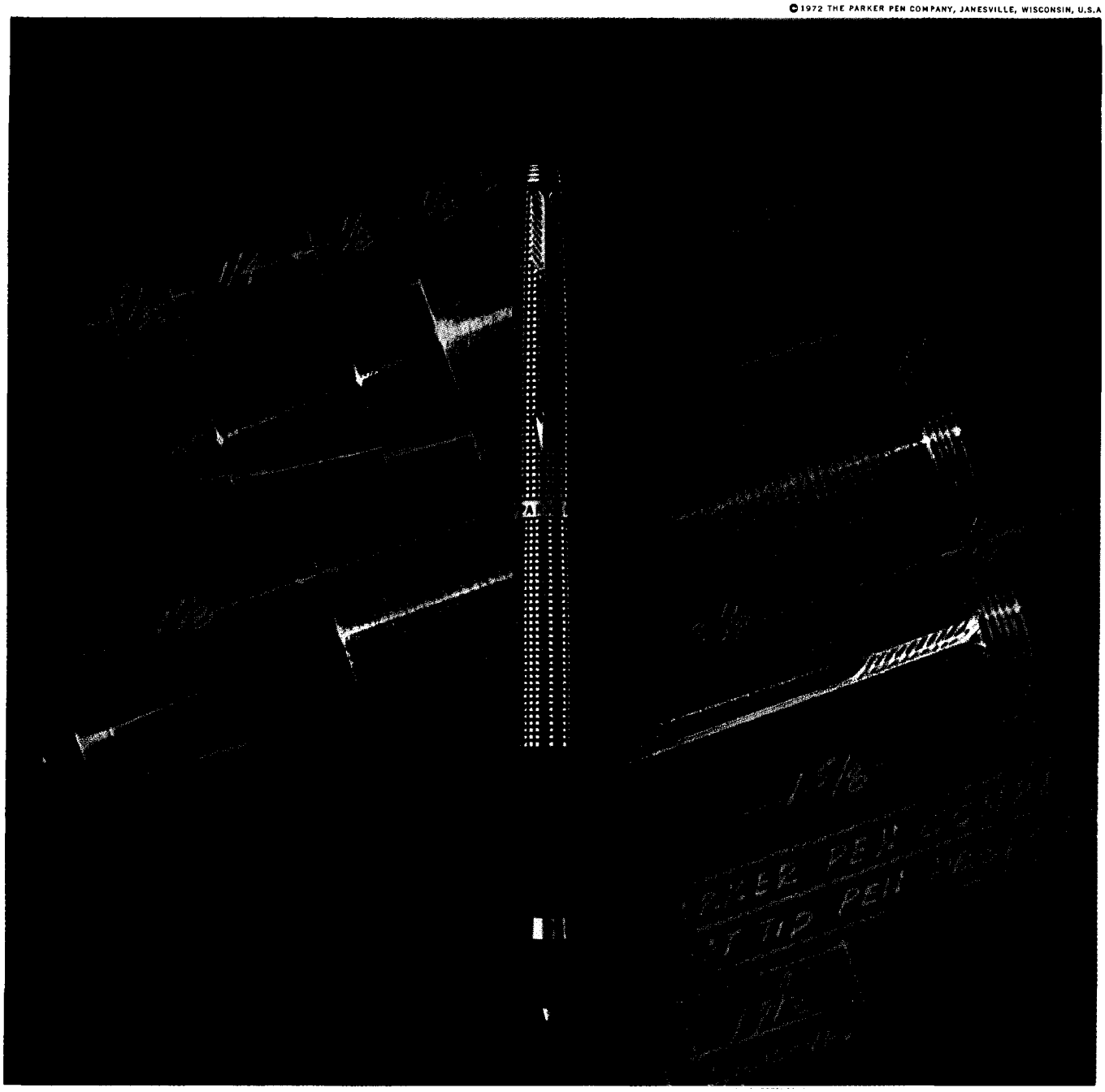

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WIN SOME, LOSE SOME

SIR: I have been a subscriber to your magazine for years, and I can't remember ever reading a short story therein which I thought was very good. The two in the April issue are particularly lousy, especially the first.

A.F. RISSON
Washington, D.C.

SIR: I am a regular buyer of *The Atlantic* at the newsstand, although I've never written to you before to tell you how much I like it. This month I'm tempted to do it, finally, if only to thank you for the three short stories in the February issue. So few magazines publish good fiction.

GERALDINE HARGREAVES
New York City

WASHINGTON MUSE

SIR: I think Elizabeth Drew's Washington Report has more significance and is better written than anything else in the April *Atlantic.*

HELEN RAND MILLER
San Francisco, Calif.

SIR: Elizabeth Drew's April Washington piece is one of the best reports I've read on the realities and dilemmas of policy change as far as budgetary problems go.

JIM MORRISON
Morgantown, W. Va.

SIR: What is the connection between the Mexican War, which began in 1846, and the temporary distribution of the Treasury surplus under Andrew Jackson by Act of Congress, in June, 1836? Wasn't Elizabeth Drew somewhat forgetful in her history?

HOWARD WHITE
Oxford, Ohio

Elizabeth Drew replies:

Mr. White is correct. The only connection is in my notebook, and in the mind of someone I interviewed. Another reader has informed me that the idea of revenue-sharing has caught on more than we might have supposed. There is an exotic dancer in San Francisco who goes by the name of "Revenue Sharon."

WAUGH'S BEST NOVEL

SIR: I disagree not only with Mr. Sissman (March "Innocent Bystander") but with the precedent of established critics on Waugh: namely, that a *Handful of Dust* is Waugh's best novel.

Handful of Dust is a poor imitation of Aldous Huxley's *Point Counter Point* (1928), and anyone who fails to see this is an idiot.

Waugh is very funny and original and inimitable when he is doing his thing, putting cartoon characters in funny situations, but his brand of humor is caricature compared with the depth-in-humor achieved by Huxley.

MARGARET BARBOUR GILBERT
New Orleans, La.

Mr. Sissman replies:

It would be idiotic of me to reply to a correspondent so arrogantly sure of herself that she can say dogmatically, ". . . anyone who fails to see this is an idiot."

However, I will point out that *Point Counter Point* has long been in eclipse, while *A Handful of Dust* goes from strength to strength from year to year. I wonder why.

EL PASO

SIR: More and more I find myself turning to your Reports & Comment section for some of the freshest writing around these days. I especially enjoyed James Conaway's article on El Paso (March *Atlantic*). It captured the feel of the place without the usual overlay of Eastern Liberal Cynicism or provincial Chamber-of-Commercialism. I hope you plan coverage of other less familiar U.S. cities.

THOMAS J. MCCARTY
Upper Montclair, N. J.

SIR: Your article on El Paso was an excellent caricature of the city, and I appreciate Jim Conaway's keeping his promise to not quote me directly.

In the future, however, I will stand up and be counted—it is safer and a whole lot closer to the truth.

Because I *am* Winnie Jordan. I am *not* a Junior League Member. The one is credible. The other is incredible. I will get over the erroneous reference. The Junior League of El Paso may never.

MRS. C.I. JORDAN III
El Paso, Tex.

The Atlantic welcomes communications from readers, but can rarely accommodate letters in excess of 500 words. Light editing, for style and economy, is the rule rather than the exception, and we assume that any letter, unless stipulated, is free for publication in our letters column.

Contributors

HENRY OWEN was chairman of the State Department's Policy Planning Council from 1966 to 1969.

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WILLIAM LABOV teaches linguistics at the University of Pennsylvania. A version of his article appears in *The Politics of Literature,* a new collection of essays.

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LESLIE NORRIS' stories and poems appear frequently in *The Atlantic.*

ABIGAIL MCCARTHY is the author of a forthcoming autobiography, *Private Faces & Public Places,* from which this article is drawn.

ELIZABETH JANEWAY's most recent book is *Man's World, Woman's Place: A Study in Social Mythology.*

WILLIAM ABRAHAMS, a contributing editor, is co-author of *The Unknown Orwell,* to be published this fall.

ROBERT EVETT, a frequent contributor, is an editor of the Washington *Star.*

L.E. SISSMAN, DAVID DENBY, EDWARD WEEKS, and PHOEBE ADAMS appear regularly in these pages.

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He for a career that's made him a consistently sought-after leading man not just in films, but in prize-winning television productions, as well.

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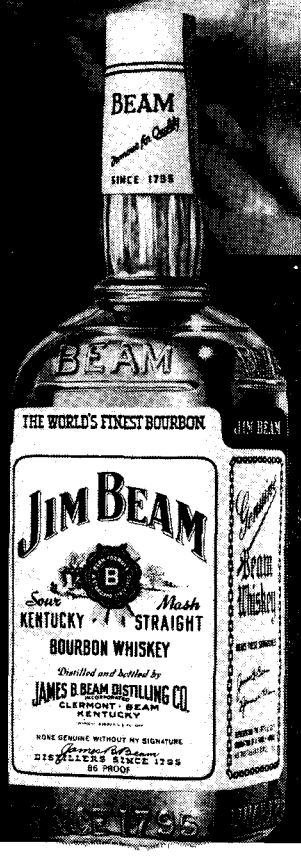

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SUPERDAMS

The perils of progress

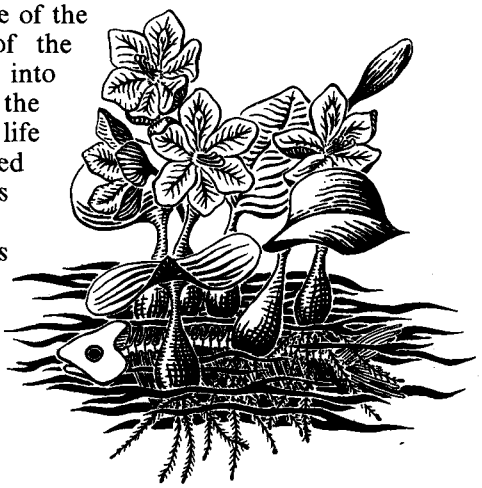
by Claire Sterling

Once they go up, who cares where they come down?
That's not my department, says Wernher von Braun.
—Tom Lehrer

What happens when we dam the flow of a great river and form an immense body of water where there was none before? We are not sure. Yet we have been persuading the world's poorer countries that there is nothing like a really big dam for a fast economic takeoff. Dozens have been built on this assumption over the past ten years: in Pakistan, India, Thailand, Laos, Iran, Ghana, Nigeria, Zambia, Egypt, Brazil, Peru, Honduras, to list a few. But the takeoff hardly ever comes, since no sooner do the dams go up than something unforeseen arises. Calls for help unfailingly follow, international agencies respond, experts fly out, information rolls in.

By now the archives of the UN's Food and Agricultural Organization, World Health Organization, UNESCO, and the Special Fund bulge with reports from hydrologists, limnologists, pedologists, seismologists, entomologists, geologists, morphologists, meteorologists, bacteriologists, epidemiologists, ornithologists, malacologists, zoologists, ichthyologists, agronomists, sociologists, and librarians to keep track of what the others are up to. Most of them expect to be at it for years. Nevertheless, they have learned enough already to suggest that there is more to building a dam than simply making sure it will stand up, store water, and generate power.

When a big dam is built, the waters backing up behind it may flood several thousand square miles of land. Every living thing not born to the water is drowned by it: trees, flowers, crops, animals, insects. Everything changes: the water's chemistry, the habitat of river fish, the kinds and numbers of aquatic plants, the life expectancy of disease-carrying insects and creatures who customarily dine on them (not to mention those on whom they customarily dine themselves), the weather, the wind, the flights of birds, the pressures on the earth's crust, the tendency, therefore, to earthquakes and landslides, the levels and movements of underground streams and springs, the fertility and salinity of the soil downstream, the depth, speed, and course of the river, the formation of the coast where it empties into the sea, the habitat of the coastal fish, the way of life for all the people who used to be where the land was before the lake came.



Not much thought was given to such matters in the old days, when ecologists weren't yet underfoot and everybody thought

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that big dams meant instant progress. Engineers loved to build them, and nobody ever told them that they ought to worry about ecosystems on top of everything else, as Tom Lehrer once noted in a slightly different context ("Once they go up, who cares where they come down? That's not my department, says Wernher von Braun"). The solid benefits—massive supplies of cheap power for industry and water for irrigation that might double or triple food crops—were rarely questioned. The ecological shocks often did not set in until later, sometimes much later, and it took still longer for the word to get around from country to country, or dam to dam, or even office to office at the same dam. (In Egypt, where I spent many weeks studying the Aswan High Dam, I kept running across officials aware of bad trouble in their own sector but assuming that everything else was fine.) It is only in the last few years, in fact, that dam-owners have begun to compare notes the world over.

The changes needn't necessarily be for the worse. Fish have been known to multiply exuberantly in newly made lakes, in the tropics especially, though not right away or forever. At first, rotting vegetation makes the water black and so short of oxygen that not many fish can stand it. Most river fish can't, anyway. But then the water clears and other species come along, living like lords as they sport among the sunken village huts and fatten on the decaying plants, decomposing animals, and each other. In Thailand, thirty-three species disappeared from the lake behind Ubolratana Dam within a year of its formation, while the cannibal murrel population doubled. In Ghana, six sorts of mormyrids and the abundant Alestes Nurse were extinct in Lake Volta within a year, whereas several sorts of cichlids and lates—exactly a year old—showed up in fishermen's nets for the first time. (They used to live in the river's still pools and backwaters, shunning its swifter downstream currents.) The newcomers have grown to bursting since Volta Lake began to fill in 1964, and enchanted Ga and Tonga fishermen are hauling in sixty thousand tons of plump specimens yearly.

On the other hand, less than five thousand tons are coming out of the Aswan High Dam's Lake Nasser, formed in the same month and year as Lake Volta and much richer for the hundred million tons of nutritious Nile silt dropping into it annually. The Egyptians still find it hard to credit this gap between reality and their golden expectations of fifty to a hundred thousand tons. "It will certainly be ten thousand tons next year," I was assured in 1970 by the codirector of the Lake Nasser Development Center, Dr. A.F.A. Latif, "and it should be twenty-five thousand by 1980." Perhaps. But much more attractive curves are already turning downward elsewhere. The catch in Lake Volta itself dropped by a fifth in 1971, and the lake behind Zambia's giant Kariba Dam seems to be getting very nearly fishless. Formed five years before Lakes Volta and Nasser, Kariba showed dazzling promise. Experts predicted an annual fish catch of twenty thousand tons in no time. Yet it was down to four thousand tons by 1963, half that by 1964, and so little by 1967 that a corps of two thousand fishermen shrank to five hundred.

FAO fishing experts, summoned by the score to the rescue, can still only guess at some reasons: overfishing, undercropping, poor gear, too many drowned trees getting in fishermen's way, too many predatory fish overindulging. The one cause they can be certain of, though, is the waterweed.

Waterweeds can be prettier than they sound, particularly the lush pink water hyacinth, which happens to be the most depraved. Once it was, in fact, just a charming Japanese flower. Then it went off with somebody or something to South America, where it began to show up whenever the weather was warm enough. Breeding sexually and vegetatively and growing a mile a minute, it can form mats thick enough for a man to walk on. By now it is choking rivers, lakes, bayous, canals, even ponds in several U.S. Gulf States, most of Central and South America, nearly all of Africa from Zaire and Rhodesia to Tanzania and Madagascar, and eastward to India, Pakistan, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, New Zealand, Australia. The whole length of the Congo River has been clotted with it; fourteen billion cubic meters of water, half the White Nile's flow; are lost every year in the Sudan's great Sudd Swamps because of its transpiration; all three of Thailand's newest man-made lakes are failing to fill for the same reason; irrigation ditches are blocked and river boats stalled by it; fish trapped under its heavy blanket die for want of food and oxygen as it cuts off more and more sunlight and air; and because it can so easily become entangled in a dam's penstocks or trashracks and so clog the turbines—its cousin the water lettuce very nearly put the Kariba Dam out of business that way—almost every hydroelectric project built in the tropics since World War II is menaced by it.

So far, waterweeds like hyacinth have survived every assault we can dream up: saw boats with Rube Goldberg contraptions, leaf-eating beetles and weed-eating fish, herbicides poured, painted, and sprayed from boats, the shore, the sky. They are either too expensive or too poisonous or no use. An ideal solution would be the manatee, mermaid to sailors of old, who has a wonderfully sunny nature and does nothing but eat water hyacinth all day long. Unhappily, manatees make such good eating themselves that they rarely have time to mate before humans take them home for dinner.

Development planners are learning not to count too much on all those fish in man-made lakes—or, to their more considerable shock, on all that water. Water, in boundless supply, was supposed to be one of the two big prizes. What wonders could not be worked with it, they would ask, for farmers struggling with parched soil or for countries

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with too many people and too little arable land?

Quite a few of these lakes were never meant to store water for irrigation in the first place. They were to provide enough for the turbines, and they can come dangerously close to falling short even of that because they evaporate, or transpire, or silt up, or leak. Evaporation takes fifteen billion cubic meters of water a year from Lake Nasser; that is nearly double the engineers' original estimate (they forgot to calculate the higher wind velocity on a big body of water) and more than a quarter of the Egyptians' whole allotment from the Nile, practically their sole source. Transpiring water hyacinth can take ten times as much, meter for meter. Silting has cut the storage capacity of Lake Austin in Texas by 95.6 percent in thirteen years, and of Algeria's Habra Reservoir by 58 percent in twenty-two years, while West Pakistan's $600 million Mangla Dam is expected to silt up completely in fifty years. And any reservoir with big cracks or open passages in the earth around or under it can leak. The United States has had to abandon several because of leakage or seepage: Cedar Reservoir near Washington, the McMillan and Hondon in New Mexico, the Tumalo in Oregon, and Jerome in Idaho. But the most spectacular case is Lake Nasser.

For all the history and extravagant hopes that went into its making, Lake Nasser cannot assure the Egyptians even of the water supply they had before. The lake was planned to store 163 billion cubic meters and to reach capacity by 1970, but it is not yet half full and may never fill (Egypt's most distinguished limnologist, Professor Abdel Fattah Gohar, told me that it might take two hundred years). We have no way of knowing exactly why, except for evaporation. But two highly educated guesses have been made, by a noted British hydrologist named John Ball in the early 1900s and an Egyptian named Abdel Aziz only a few weeks before ground was broken for the High Dam.

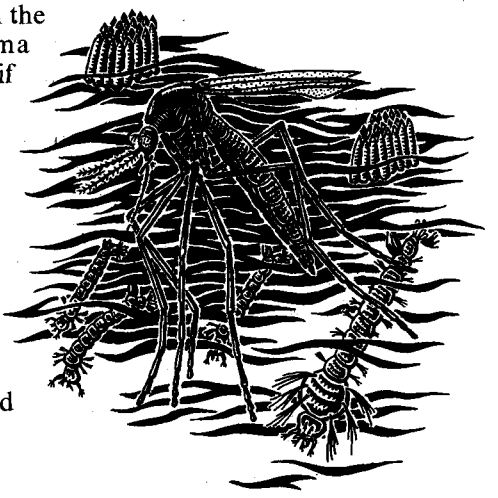
They pointed out that Lake Nasser's entire three-hundred-mile Western bank is composed of porous Nubian sandstone, part of a million-square-kilometer aquifer underlying the Libyan Desert which can absorb endless quantities of water. Directly under the High Dam, furthermore, the Nile channel cuts across a water-bearing bed nearly half a mile deep, through which water may flow either in from the Libyan aquifer or out. Mostly it used to flow in, before any dams were built around there, adding about three billion cubic meters yearly to the Nile flow downstream. But after the first Aswan Dam was built years ago, pressure from the new reservoir pushed all this water the other way and as much again besides. So the Egyptians had lost six billion cubic meters by tinkering with the Nile before the High Dam even got started. What with a far bigger dam, an incomparably bigger lake, that water-bearing bed, those sandstone banks, and that colossal evaporation rate, Lake Nasser is losing more than a third of the water flowing into it, thirty billion cubic meters yearly. Downstream, the Egyptians are getting nearly ten billion cubic meters less than they used to, 53.7 billion instead of 63 billion.

It need hardly be added that Lake Nasser's waters are not going to coax much barren desert into bloom after all. Here too, Egyptian hopes die hard. At the Lake Nasser Development Center in Aswan, devoted Egyptian and UN scientists continue to study and map the baked, treeless land along the new lakeshore, against the time when the lake may fill or science may find some cheap way to grow food in dry sand. "We're working for our children or their children," an Egyptian geologist told me. "Someday, somebody will make use of our soil maps. Not now. The turbines have to run; we can't spare another drop of water."

At the Ministry for the High Dam in Cairo, Dr. Aziz Hana used practically the same words to say the same thing. What he didn't say, because it wasn't his department, was that even with more water coming downstream, there wouldn't be enough suitable land to reclaim. The late President Nasser had hoped for 1.3 million acres, still the official figure. But soil studies made before the dam was completed showed that only 750,000 acres were suitable, and known reclamation projects add up to less than half that: a 5 percent increase in cultivated acreage, whereas the Egyptian population grew by a third while the High Dam was going up.

Whatever the advice he wouldn't listen to, Nasser was not the first, or last, to fall into error. Not many superdams are turning deserts green, for a lot of reasons; and a good many have engulfed more and better land than they could reclaim.

Nobody knows the value in money of all the land, plants, timber, ancient monuments and artifacts, villages, and towns lying at the bottom of the world's man-made lakes. The millennial site of Abu Simbel's twin temples and the whole Sudanese town of Wadi Halfa are among them. So are some of Ghana's richest cocoa farms and Zambia's two-crops-a-year alluvial lands on the banks of the Zambezi. Giant stands of teak are now dying in the Ivory Coast's Bandama Valley; and when and if the first mainstream dam is built across Southeast Asia's Mekong River, at Pa Mong, nearly a million acres of prime paddy land will go under in Northeast Thailand and the magnificent Laotian valleys of Ban Done and Vong Vien.



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Nobody is quite certain, either, how many people have been forced to move by the rising waters. There are always some who take to the hills never to be heard from, as happened in the Tennessee Valley. To the best of our knowledge, a hundred thousand were displaced in Egypt and the Sudan, nearly a hundred thousand in Ghana, at least a hundred thousand in the Ivory Coast, and half a million may join the list should the projected Pa Mong Dam eventually span the Mekong. It costs a lot to move them and is starting to cost more as the practice spreads. When the Ivory Coast's Kossou Dam was about to be sealed in 1970, an enterprising Baoulé chief wrote to the mayor of Tigne in the French Savoie, where a big dam had gone up some years before, inquiring about the demands of his constituents. The mayor's list, long and expensive, has become a kind of charter for a fast-growing World Brotherhood of Doomed Cities.

Yet even when a thousand dollars a head is spent on these refugees, few can be resettled on the kind of good bottomland they lost. Rarely is there any other unoccupied land except the stony arid kind higher up. Thailand now finds one such political snakepit in its Northeast region, right below the Chinese border. The Ivory Coast, trying to resettle President Houphouet Boigny's fellow Baoulés on the overcrowded lands of rival tribesmen (at a cost of about a $100 million, as much again as the Kossou Dam itself cost), seems to be heading for another.

I've met displaced Thais and Baoulés, and Ghanaians in their "gone elsewhere" villages, and the Nubians of Upper Egypt in their squat dreary cement huts at Kom Ombo. Some were better off than others, of course, but nearly all showed symptoms of the classic resettlement syndrome: unselfreliant, passively aggrieved, dispirited.

The Baoulés I visited were still in their thatched village of Angouissé when I came, waiting for the rising waters to overtake them: they would believe it when they saw it, they said. They were full of complaints and premonitions. Their elders had visited the new settlement prepared for them, much grander than their own with $1600 houses and corrugated tin roofs. But it would be hot, they said, bulldozers having knocked down every tree in sight; the houses had no kitchens, which the government, not they, ought to build; the single well was inadequate and too far away. There would be no food until the new crops came in, they thought (though the FAO's World Food Program will be feeding them for two years). They had been invited to learn how to fish, but disliked and feared the water. They were advised to raise cattle on the poorer soil, but didn't care for cattle. What they cared about was land; and they'd be getting only an acre apiece, half what they had now, not enough to live on.

The Thais I met, near Khonkaen in Northeast Thailand, had already been through it all. Their rice fields were gone, lying at the bottom of the Nam Pung Reservoir. Their resettlement money was gone too, long since. They had spent a backbreaking year or two clearing the harsh upland soil, with no help from the government and practically no water. About one in five had drifted away and dropped out of sight, many to join up with the Communist terrorists. The rest were trying now to grow soybeans and kenaf, a kind of jute. Some were starting to make out at last. Others never would.

Everywhere I went they would tell me they had never felt well since leaving home. "They are not sick," a social worker explained. "It is too much trouble, too much thinking."

This is not just a matter of land. People whose families had lived for centuries where the lakes form may languish and die of unbearable traumatic shock when forced to part with their homesteads, ancestral graves, fetishes. Mortality rates shot up among evacuated Ghanaians when Lake Volta formed; the very young and very old, particularly, died faster. They may also sicken on the road, traveling under deplorable conditions. Or they may fall sick simply because of living near the water.

Wherever a superdam has gone up in tropical Africa and Asia, the lake behind it has brought an explosion of water-borne disease. Even small dams can do it, as the Ivory Coast has learned. One built there at Bia in 1964 managed, within a year, to bring on raging epidemics of river blindness (eight hundred cases), sleeping sickness (two hundred cases), and bilharzia infecting four out of every five inhabitants. Fortunately there weren't many inhabitants. When Lake Kossou fills, though, World Health officials expect "a very serious threat" of sleeping sickness among a hundred thousand refugees and others on its densely populated shores, "endemic" bilharzia and malaria, a "special danger" of yellow fever, a "violent outbreak" of guinea worm—the fiery serpent of the Bible—and a chain of "excreta illnesses" such as dysentery, cholera, and typhoid.

This happens partly because people accustomed to relieving themselves in the bush do so in the water instead. In good part, also, the reason is change of habitat for the carrier insect. A few, as uncomfortable in their new surroundings as the refugees they live on, must either get away or perish. The most vicious is the black fly, simulium, causing river blindness through West Africa. Dependent on fast-flowing water with plenty of oxygen, the black fly hates the still waters of a new lake. But it quickly finds happiness downstream, where the water thunders through the dam's sluices. In Ghana, long cursed by river blindness on the Volta's banks, the affliction has not been eliminated but merely redistributed.

Almost all other carriers of tropical water-borne diseases rejoice in their new House and Garden setting. Nothing else offers better breeding conditions than a large, calm lake surface and several thousand

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miles of twisting shoreline full of shallow nooks and crannies for malarial mosquitoes, the culex fly bearing yellow fever, dengue fever, and elephantiasis, the guinea worm growing three feet long in the human body and causing painful ulcers, the liver fluke loitering in the insides of raw fish (a favorite Northern Thai dish is raw fish dipped in fresh cow bile), and that scourge of all Africa and Asia, the snail—carrier of bilharzia.

Several sorts of snail are good at this, none of which can survive in fast-flowing rivers. What they like is placid waters: irrigation canals, say, or man-made lakes. They may land there by the merest chance, carried by migrating birds or the wind. Once settled, they can multiply at a rate increasing their numbers fifty-thousandfold in four months. Lake Nasser is thickly infested with them along its entire shoreline, not yet a calamity because hardly anybody lives there. Infestation is much the same in all Egyptian irrigation canals, old and new, as in most of Africa and the Far East.

The snail doesn't attack humans. It simply plays host to the prickly-spined blood flukes which do. The flukes' larvae need only to be deposited in the water by an infected person's urinating, defecating, or just bathing, whereupon it homes in on the snail to lie in wait for the next human victim. Any healthy person setting food in these infested waters can pick up the fluke without a bite or scratch in warning; once lodged in his bloodstream, the fluke lives happily ever after, perpetually copulating.

A man can die of bilharzia, but more often he is condemned to live in growing pain and exhaustion. The chronic sufferer grows steadily weaker from stomach cramps and damage to the heart, lungs, liver. He may develop cirrhosis, bladder and kidney infections, cancer; and even if not, he can rarely put in more than three hours' work a day. There is no lasting cure: anybody freed of bilharzia in the morning can pick it up again before nightfall. The safest temporary cure is an old-fashioned tartar emetic which must be administered in twelve weekly intravenous injections causing violent pain and vomiting. Although newer drugs keep coming onto the market, none is entirely satisfactory, and some are singularly unsatisfactory, tending to induce maniacal tendencies, hallucinations, or an uncontrollable impulse to jump out of the window.

Egypt, among the hardest hit countries because practically all Egyptians live on or near the Nile and the countless irrigation canals branching off it, has tried uselessly for years to bring down the bilharzia rate. Fourteen million of its thirty million people had bilharzia before the High Dam was built; one in ten deaths was caused by it; and the cost to the state in lost working time ran to half a billion dollars annually. Since the High Dam went up, the infection rate in areas with new canals has risen from zero to 80 percent.

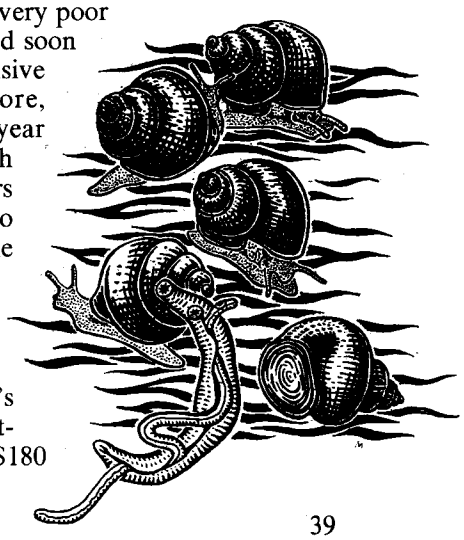
Some say that all the land enriched by such dams makes up for the spiritual and physical impoverishment of the people. Yet Egypt's land, after construction of a billion-dollar dam, is certainly getting no richer. True, the Egyptians are no longer threatened by the Nile's yearly floods, but they're no longer getting the flood's priceless gift either: the silt that has made the Nile Delta the most fertile on earth is dropping to the bottom of Lake Nasser.

A foreigner looking down on the now translucent green Nile, as I did from a hotel balcony in Cairo, might find it lovely. To the Egyptian agronomist clutching my arm as he pointed, it was frightening. "I'd give my soul to turn it muddy brown again," he said. That cannot happen, ever.

The Egyptians I met who were doing soil studies could not be sure how much the final damage might be. Nevertheless, they estimated that about two thirds of the 2.35 million tons of chemical fertilizer already in use goes to make up for the lost silt. All six million cultivated acres in Egypt will be needing fertilizer soon, along with potassium, nitrogen, calcium, magnesium, copper, zinc, molybdenum, borum, and manganese for the delta's once inexhaustible soil. The yearly cost of the extra fertilizer alone comes to upwards of a hundred million dollars, and this fertilizer will be a permanent necessity.

Not every dam holds the silt back, of course, and some do impound enough water to leave farmers knee-deep. But using the water for irrigation is no simple matter, and can be a positive menace at times. Eight years and twelve million dollars after the U.S. Reclamation Bureau began to study the Mekong's projected multibillion-dollar Pa Mong Dam, it discovered that the world's largest salt deposit lies under Thailand's Khorat Plateau, which Pa Mong was supposed to irrigate. One splendid irrigation project like that could make the soil so saline that nothing would ever grow on it again.

Actually, that particular project was not so splendid. Only 106,000 acres were going to be irrigated in Thailand anyway, a sad fraction of the million acres of fine paddy land that would be drowned by Pa Mong. Theoretically, irrigation would double rice yields there and permit two or three crops a year. But the Khorat Plateau has very poor laterite soil, which would soon be worn out under intensive cultivation. Furthermore, two or three crops a year would mean that much more work for farmers who are accustomed to planting only when the monsoons come, and who know nothing about irrigation. The difficulties are already familiar to Thailand's Royal Irrigation Department, which has spent $180



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million to develop irrigation in the last two years with only about four hundred successful acres to show for it.

To be agriculturally useful, Pa Mong's waters would need investments of not only about $400 an acre to prepare the land but five times as much for cheap fertilizer and farm credits, feeder roads and access to markets, training and motivation for farmers provided by a far better extension service than the Thais (or we) would readily provide. What with one thing and another, therefore, the modest goal of bringing 106,000 acres under irrigation would cost Thailand no less than a quarter of a billion dollars.

Naturally, there is always somebody who wants to try an irrigation scheme wherever a big dam goes up with enough water storage; the schemes *look* so good on paper. Yet even when they can be made to work, the heavy use of water and generally poor drainage cause underground water levels to rise and create an accumulation of soil salts that knocks the land out of use sooner or later. Pakistan got into such trouble this way that only by drilling hundreds of thousands of tube wells was it saved from agricultural ruin. Egypt, nearly all of whose cultivated land is becoming dangerously waterlogged and salty now, has already started to install expensive closed underground drains on a million acres in the Delta. This alone, the most ambitious drainage project on earth, will cost $147 million, of which the World Bank is putting up less than a tenth, which the Egyptians will have to pay back. To install closed drains and the pumps to go with them on the remaining land would cost well over a billion dollars, a quarter of the country's income.

There are several other ways in which a superdam can cost more than its list price: the scouring of riverbeds downstream undermining other dams and bridges; the erosion of coastal dunes and sandbars, thereby endangering cities like Alexandria and permitting seepage of salt water into sweet-water lakes; the loss of ocean fish should the dam withhold organic silt required for the aquatic food chain (Egypt has lost 18,000 tons of sardines a year that way, and if just two projected mainstream dams are built on the Mekong, the owners of 300,000 fishing boats at the river's mouth might go bankrupt); landslides; and earthquakes on the magnitude of six or more on the Richter scale, such as the one touched off by India's Kogna Dam in 1967, which killed 200 people.

The payoff is supposed to come from hydroelectric power. There, in the installed capacity of kilowatt-hours, lies the secret of the economic takeoff, or so planners say; and judging from the comparative figures—6615 kwh per person in the United States, 6746 in Sweden, 2364 in Soviet Russia, 79 in India—they ought to be right. But power installed is not necessarily power consumed, as the Egyptians, who have yet to find a use for even a third of theirs from Aswan, have discovered.

The capacity can be enormous. The High Dam's is ten billion kilowatts a year; the Tarbella's in Pakistan is almost as much; the Pa Mong's on the Mekong would be twice that; and if all forty-odd dams under consideration in the Mekong Development Scheme were built, they would plunge all Indochina—indeed all Southeast Asia—into a blaze of light. Then what?

The power produced would be cheaper than thermal or nuclear power, but only if every kilowatt-hour were consumed from the start, over a span of a hundred years. Even this would not take into account the social and ecological costs of uprooting several million people in the Mekong Basin, drowning several thousand villages and hamlets in fertile river valleys covering the better part of 25,000 square kilometers, spreading sickness among men and cattle, dispersing or killing off a great many fish in the river and sea—the giant prawn and unique ten-foot-long giant catfish would be among the first to go—scouring 1500 miles of riverbed, and putting an end to the annual silt-laden floods nourishing twelve million acres of luxuriant delta soil in Cambodia and South Vietnam.

To use the power, furthermore, everything taken for granted in an advanced industrial state would have to be developed: grids, factories, transport, communication, trained workers, seasoned management, markets—in short, the *acceuil* (the French seem to have the only word for this) without which the power goes to waste. On those terms, the Mekong's dam network would cost from $25 billion to $50 billion. No poor Asian or African country, with so few skills, so little experience, such meager capital, could be sure of success even then.

It is curious but true that such calculations simply weren't made until quite recently. Engineers honestly didn't know they were committing ecological sins: who did? Rich countries putting up the money sincerely thought of themselves as benefactors. Poor countries were suitably grateful, and displaced people getting pushed around never seemed to fall into anybody's department.

Times have changed. Wherever I've gone to report on these projects, I've met officials eaten by doubt. In Yamassoukrou, operating center for the Ivory Coast's Kossou Dam, harassed social workers coping with refugees dreamed of putting up stickers saying IS THIS DAM REALLY NECESSARY? In Ghana, whose Volta Dam is a glittering success because Valco Aluminum is a built-in market for its power, the curse of the refugees still lies heavy after seven years. "I sometimes wonder if the whole thing was worth it," said Dr. Letitia Obeng, co-manager of the UNDP/Ghana Volta Lake Research Project. "Oh, it's grand! But you wouldn't believe what our people went through." In Cairo, where the High Dam's spell is still strong, only the elite know the extent of the damage. Privately, they will admit that they probably would not build it if they had things to do over again.

The disenchantment is strongest in Bangkok, where five hundred UN experts have been working

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for nearly two decades with the four riparian states of the Mekong Committee to harness one of the last great rivers still undammed in the world. When I was there last spring, the U.S. Reclamation Bureau was just retiring from the field in confusion. It had been working under extremely trying conditions since 1964 to determine whether or not the Pa Mong Dam would be feasible. By the time it came up with the affirmative answer, the place was swarming with ecologists, and word had long since gotten through from Egypt, India, Pakistan. "Who needs Pa Mong, really?" demanded Kasame Chatikavanij, director of Thailand's Electricity Generating Authority, when I asked him about it. "Of course we could use the power eventually; we have a very nice growth rate. But we are not rich. I would rather put our money into smaller projects, a little at a time, as the need arises, and not gamble it all on one big throw—like Aswan." Not all Thais agree, least of all Boonrod Binson, Thai member of the Mekong Committee. Nevertheless, what little is left of a once unclouded faith in Pa Mong is to be found more among would-be givers than receivers.

Not that all poor countries are turning down all such propositions nowadays. They are merely learning to ask more questions. After all, thermal power stations can be built for a fraction of the cost, one at a time as consumption grows. Atomic plants, cleaner though costlier, can also be built in fairly small units. Once a giant dam is built, though, it is *there,* evaporating, transpiring, leaking, silting up or weeding over, scouring the riverbed, driving the fish away or killing them off, drenching or salting the soil, breaking timeless natural laws, banishing people; and every day those turbines stand idle the local minister of finance is closer to a nervous breakdown.

Because nobody is giving them away. All the rich countries offer is hard currency, technicians, and equipment, on loan, at interest. In the end it is the poor countries who pay, and pay, and pay. □

DIVINEST SYZYGY

The syzygies are the paired opposites, where the One is never separated from the Other, its antithesis. It is a field of personal experience which leads directly to. . . the attainment of the self. This realm cannot be captured by any formula, but can only be hinted at to one who already knows.
—Jung

Scrofulous flouter of demarcations, insolent touter
of strange salvations, the Thing, half man, half woman,
half hoary god and bear, high on the bald hill sat
ululating at the moon. Then bored with twitching
one cheek, it rose and shook from its hairy tits
its boomerang (the people were resting, unsuspecting).
Snorting, She-He splayed ox-arms wide and flung
that silver clavicle down at the town:

It spun
over the first roofs, then arched with a crash
through a church window, slicing the heads and limbs
from sexless seraphim and showering glass
like grace on the bishop. As it zinged past
her door, Mrs. Andergrass, the actress,
felt a wind lift her hair; seizing the hand
of her startled lady friend, she ran for the square
where each long-flanneled father, pajamaed and hair-netted mother
danced and melted from their heat like butter
(no one would ever again know one from another).

Those who could still stand ran from the town,
shouting curses up at the moon-soaked hill:
"Call your mad stick home, call it home!
May it brak all your bones!" they groaned.
They watched: She caught it in His hand and smiled.

by Lorita Whitehead

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STRICTLY PERSONAL

by John P. Sisk

The loneliness of the long-distance advertiser

Oversexed Dude, 29, desires oversexed chick. Let's meet and see if we groove. —the *Berkeley Barb*

Doing Hard Time—want to hear from bitchin' chicks who dig bikes and high times. —*Easyriders*

Ore. Lady, 27-single. Wants to hear from intelligent single male, 28-35, with varied interests.
—the *National Insider*

Independent Man, artist-industrialist, inventor-explorer, recently divorced, several degrees, corporation owner, unusually good looks, in thirties, relaxed, good-humored, interest in enjoying life and in meeting F. with talent and beauty, warmth and humor.
—the *New York Review of Books*

The above exhibit indicates that I have been reading "personals," which, as the more observant magazine and tabloid readers know, tend to occupy more and more back-page space. I began to read personals out of idle curiosity after I had read everything else in a particular publication, but before long I was turning to them first, and before much longer I was underlining, and occasionally, when the specimens were rare enough, filing them away. I believe that I have developed a feeling for the cultural and sociological boundaries that structure the world of personals. I am reasonably sure, for instance, that the lady from Oregon would not expect to hear from any one of the above men, whatever his intelligence, versatility, or variety of interests, nor would any of them expect to hear from her. People who place personals in the *New York Review* generally include stylistic signals designed to discourage response from readers of *Easyriders,* a monthly directed to the swinging biker.

Not that there isn't a certain democratic fuzziness about the cultural and sociological boundaries. An *NYR* personal such as this:

Two married Execs, mid 30s, seek groovy-looking, sophisticated chicks to share fine dining, entertainment, travel, fun and games, private jet, yacht, etc.

sounds as if it belongs in *Playboy.* But perversely, *Playboy* carries no personals—quite likely because they'd have to sound more like this:

Mature Unmarked Bunny, 41-24-33, no silicone, Taurus, out-going, fun-loving, versatile, wants sincere relationship with virile broadminded executive types, upper salary range, vasectomy preferred, who dig Andy Warhol, gourmet cooking, Germaine Greer, the Detroit Lions, what have you.

There is nothing especially distinctive, however, in the nonpresence of personals. Many magazines and tabloids, including most of the big-circulation slicks, still have no personals. You will look in vain for them in *Rolling Stone, Variety,* and *Esquire,* where they are at least thinkable—as distinguished from the *New Yorker* and *Commentary,* say, where they are both nonexistent and unthinkable. On the other hand, the *Saturday Review, Nation, Argosy, Atlantic, Outdoor Life,* and *New Republic* feature "Personals" sections in which one rarely finds anything personal. Instead: bumper stickers and lapel buttons, water beds, plans for getting out of debt, exhortations to resist war taxes and abortion laws.

The uncertainty about what is and what is not a personal can result in some strange disagreements about classification. For instance, "Girls from Japan" "seek matrimony" in the "Personals" section of *Rampage* and the *National Insider.* However, they seek it in the "ETC." section of the *NYR,* where they must keep company with pro-Nader bumper stickers and anti-Nixon posters. One can only conclude (xenophobia and racism being unimaginable in this context) that *NYR* editors consider a group appeal to be too impersonal to rank with the personals.

No publication has a better record with personals than the *NYR.* It is about as likely to let a water bed into its "Personals" section as it is to ask Ann Landers for a book review. Consider these typical *NYR* personals:

Folksinger-Lawyer, Washington, D.C., 25, seeks honorably interested girl, 18-26, to take to movies.

Divorced Gentleman Writer, Fairfield County, past forty, tired of committed-sincere-dedicated woman. Seeks carefree, imaginative, pussy cat lady.

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Both of these suggest particular persons in recognizably human predicaments. Here are true personals.

Like the *NYR, Easyriders* has a purist's taste in these matters: people are kept segregated from gadgets and services and they are particularized:

> I'm still looking for an ol' lady who's all together, likes to ball, ride bikes and party. No big mouths or hung-up types. Send photo and letter to. . . .

This seeker has specified both his personality and desires so exactly that he has no need for a dating service—not even of Mind Mates, which boasts of being able to bring together flower children and Wall Street tycoons. Nor is he likely to feel any need for advice from Germaine Greer or Kate Millett. Personals in this publication have a forthright stormtrooper machismo about them. The woman's place is against the sissy bar.

There is more variety, if less panache, on the *National Insider* level. Tabloids in this class (the *Exploiter,* the *National Mirror,* the *National Bulletin, Inside News,* the *National Informer,* etc.) make a major thing of personals. I counted over a hundred in a recent *Insider.* Here the ritually recurring words are "sincere" and "broadminded." Personals, on this level (except for "discreet" couples seeking "new friendships") will very often state that their authors are lonely. Such frankness is rare on other levels.

There is no point to looking for explicit loneliness in the aphrodisiac world of the *Berkeley Barb.* Its "Adadada" section may contain such wistful old-fashioned appeals as this:

> Attractive well-educated female in her forties wants a lasting relationship with a very special kind of guy.

but the general tone is indicated by these:

> Warm licentious but sweet, dirty virile man seeks sensual fem. soul mate any race for erotic dates.

> Anything Anyplace. B-Guy. Athletic muscular stud. Looks yng, hung big, versatile.

> Hung Unbelievably Right. I'm versatile, 5′ 10″ & 145 lbs. For a completely satisfying time with a clean cut masculine guy call. . . .

The authors of these three personals are apparently very special guys, but it is unlikely that they are what the wistful lady has in mind. She is wasting her time looking for romance in the *Barb,* which, to judge from its ads, has far more confidence in French ticklers, cordless vibrators, filmed Swedish orgies, assorted rubber goods, and technicians prepared to deliver every conceivable variety of sexual ecstasy.

It is a relief to return to the purer back pages of the *New York Review:*

> Creative Man, 33, Manhattan, seeks lovely lady to share Coltrane's music, Orton's theater, Feiffer's films, Ailey's dances, Vonnegut's books, India's cuisine—and my company.

> Man, 55, Manhattan resident, aware and well-traveled, wishes to meet warm and intelligent woman who likes the theater, music, wine and food.

> Trilingual Satyr, tall, 58, seeks liberated, intelligent nymph any age, fluent any language besides native. Marriage after procreation, otherwise share expenses. Limited existing progeny acceptable. Prefer recently divorced or bereaved woman having minimal cults, habits, vices who can quarrel without rancor.

> Beautiful Man inside and out seeks woman, intelligent, curious, warm, sensitive, vital, graceful, capable of growth, serene in her womanhood, strong enough to love and be loved.

It should be clear from the above quartet that *NYR* personals are markedly different. Their authors would not be caught dead using "sincere," or "broadminded," or "discreet." For them the favorite honorific term is "warm," usually in a context where "sensitive," "vital," "liberated," and "relaxed" are stated or implied. Perhaps the warmth in the *NYR* has something to do with the feminine touch: often half or more of the personals are from women. However, the men tend to be no less warm; indeed, many suggest an engaging vulnerability that is pleasantly in contrast with the tone of other parts of the publication. It is worth noting too that only rarely do swinging couples seek "new friendships" in the *NYR.* This is not to imply that the *NYR* is explicitly against swinging, which it might easily enough accommodate as a symbolic strike against the tyranny of the nuclear family. The more likely explanation is that the *NYR* reader tends to see swinging as a hopelessly middle-class pastime, in a class with bowling. In any event, the authors of *NYR* personals are predominantly heterosexual and individual, and are often quite frankly interested in marriage, or at least in a "serious, rewarding relationship."

Also, they sound much more interesting than do the authors of personals in other publications. In fact, their very superiority raises the inevitable question: why do such warm, versatile, sensitive, vital, cosmopolitan, intelligent, and witty people have to advertise for companionship? The "Creative Man" personal above really does not make any sense. One can understand why lonesome bikers and swinging couples have to advertise, but this fellow ought to have the problem of how to secure a little privacy. However, the question overlooks the fact that even the best of us must somehow publish ourselves to the world or perish. There is a strong possibility that many personals in the *NYR,* though meant truly enough to elicit response, are at the same time what personals in other publications are: reinforcing advertisements for oneself—inexpensive means of objectifying, making a matter of public record, an ideal image of the self. *NYR's* Creative Man no less than the *Barb's* superstud, "hung unbelievably right," now have concrete evidence that they really exist "out there" in terms they can accept.

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But the terms themselves are the terms of the advertisements that are an integral part of the back-of-the-book world in which personals are generally found. To assert oneself personally in this environment one has to compete in the marketplace of goods and services. This may not be much of a risk for swinging couples or superstuds, who must be willing to diminish themselves to objects competing in a world of objects. But one might expect that even an occasional reading of the *NYR* would discourage any tendencies toward this kind of competition. One would, however, be wrong.

> I am 32, beautiful, intelligent, accomplished, strong, wise, modest. I have much love to give vital, sensitive, solvent, rich adult male seeking mate.

Perhaps an egalitarian might take comfort here. If the rhetoric of advertising is the real lingua franca of the modern world, so that Dick Gregory is the mirror image of Spiro Agnew, then all men are brothers in a very real sense and life against the sissy bar is not so far removed after all from academe or Elaine's Manhattan saloon. There is further comfort to be taken as one notes the extent to which, on all cultural levels, the American mind appears in purely personal matters to be trapped in an old-fashioned movie: very special guy wants to meet very special girl in order to redeem the time, and short of that fairy-tale consummation, nothing else matters very much. The unbelievably-hung superstud may appear to have declined from his great original, but he, no less than the Creative Man, derives from Prince Charming, whose destiny it is to wake Sleeping Beauty to a fullness of loving life in which he will himself be fulfilled. And the appropriate decor for this wistful fabulous movie is the world of magic objects and services.

You may catch the Lorelei spirit of this mythic world at both ends of the tabloid spectrum—here, for instance, in the *NYR:*

> Swinging Affectionate Gal in early thirties with features and body of a Hollywood starlet and matching brains and imagination seeks steady relationship with business or professional man in late thirties or early forties who is both cultured and athletic;

or here in the *National Bulletin:*

> N.Y. Candyland, 22. Long hair, flashing eyes, creamy fair compl., desires man who will give secure life, love any race.

These are dream girls, truly enough, fit to inhabit the Bower of Bliss in Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene.* Yet even they cannot measure up to the London Love Doll, whom you may find seductively displayed (in what is effectively a meta-personal) in such magazines as *Headquarters Detective* and *World of Man.* The London Love Doll is "an amazingly lifelike companion"; her dimensions are 37″-23″-36″; her "soft 'fleshy' vinyl skin seems almost real"; as your "personal servant of pleasure" she is guaranteed to cure boredom and loneliness; you may dance and swim with her or take her to bed since she is made "just for love . . . fun, companionship and wild excitement"; she may be ordered for $16.95 from a firm in Van Nuys, California. If, as is likely, she comes with a repair kit she is one answer to the male's quest for the Eternal Woman.

In the final analysis, however, the London Love Doll may have less to do with Romantic Love than with that promise of endless plenty that tantalizes all of us, whether we spend our idle moments with *Rampage* or the *New York Review.* Unfortunately, the image of abundance, whether supplied by the neighborhood shopping center or by the "Talking Shop" section of *Esquire,* is not the same thing as the experience of abundance. Where there is so much and in such variety, and where what one sees has the poetic power to suggest an abundance extending infinitely beyond the horizon of immediate vision, the effect may be to aggravate one's sense of privation. Hence our familiar paradox. We may live in the most affluent society ever, yet unless we learn to protect ourselves from the poetry of our environment, we can experience privation with an intensity possible in few other cultures. One of the luxuries of affluence is the increased capacity for impoverished experience.

This painful realization—this sense of having been induced by envious gods to expect too much—haunts the world of the personals. The two married executives seeking the groovy girls, the beautiful man inside and out, the swinging biker, the lady from Oregon, the anything-anyplace B-Guy, the trilingual satyr—all these become legendary figures in a supermarket-wasteland in which nothing much ever happens, despite the fact that anything could happen at any moment; in which whatever has happened was long ago found to be spoiled by its false promises. It is as if the swinging liberated sixties, out of which these appeals and offers come, only intensified our sense of isolation and desolation in the very act of breaking down traditional barriers of reticence and self-denial.

Independence and freedom, it would appear, are the spiritual forms of affluence to which the correlated form of privation is loneliness. Seen in this context, the "Personals" section becomes a branch of American literature in which the most familiar of American dilemmas is posed once more. What if our sissy bars are pure gold; if our young men are hung like bulls and our women have breasts like basketballs; if our cordless vibrators and Swedish movies give us split seconds in eternity; if we swing in new friendships till the cows come home and our hemorrhoids finally cease to be a problem; if we dig Wittgenstein, Sade, Genet, Coltrane, Borges, Vonnegut, Burroughs, Barthelme; if we are creative, versatile, sincere, broadminded, quiet, relaxed, liberal, warm, witty, cosmopolitan, discreet, ecologic, macrobiotic, and astrologic. Is there any point to all this if in the end we are only lonelier than ever? □

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A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR AT PARRIS ISLAND

by Steven Warner

"Look what we got here!
A pacifist in my Marine Corps!"

I sat down and told the barber to cut off all my hair. Two men sitting by the wall looked up from their *True Adventure* magazines. The barber asked if I was joking and shook his head when I said no. He put a sheet around my neck, fiddled with his clippers, and then went at it. One of the men by the wall asked why I was doing this, and I said I was being drafted the next day. He asked why I didn't wait for the free haircut from Uncle Sam. I told him I wanted to cheat the hangman. He didn't understand.

When the barber was done, I put on a baseball cap and went to the library where I xeroxed a map of Houston. I didn't doubt for a moment that I would be sent to Fort Sam Houston for training as a medic.

In 1967, when I abruptly quit graduate studies in psychology, I realized for the first time that I was going to be drafted. I wrote the Cleveland draft board and requested a 1A-O classification—I would serve in the military, but I would not kill anyone. My reasons were philosophical and humanistic, had nothing to do with theism, had a lot to do with the Indochina War. A few days after, I received an "Application for Conscientious Objector Status" form which I completed and mailed back. A week later, I received a draft card with 1A-O typed on it. I was an official conscientious objector exempt from bearing arms or taking weapons training.

The day after my haircut, I and eighty-nine others sat and waited for our government's next move. It was late afternoon and we had been at the induction center since 6 A.M. taking tests and having our bodies examined. A black had fallen asleep in his chair, his head straight back, his mouth wide open, his breathing very loud. The sergeant in charge of the room stood up and told us that for the past week they had been inducting men into the Marine Corps and they needed six from our group. He passed out a form which read:

CHECK ONE—( ) ARMY ( ) USMC ( ) NO PREFERENCE.

I figured that since I was a CO, I had to be sent to the Army. So I checked ( ) NO PREFERENCE. The sergeant gathered the ninety forms. Eighty-seven had checked ( ) ARMY. Two had checked ( ) USMC, and one had checked ( ) NO PREFERENCE. I had just become a Marine. The other three Marine recruits were selected by chance. One of them was the black who had been sleeping with his mouth open.

The six of us were taken into another room. Immediately a kid wearing a synthetic leather jacket and a 1950s ducktail haircut began complaining. He wasn't going into the Marines, he said. There was nothing that could be done, said the sergeant. The kid sat down for a second, then stood up and started crying, and said he didn't care what they did to him, he wasn't going into the Marines.

The sergeant left and came back with two men dressed in wrinkled suits. They were "FBI agents," and they were going to talk to him about the consequences of draft resistance. The kid gave out a wail and was escorted from the room. I saw him a couple of hours later, still crying and shaking his head.

Now I went to the sergeant and told him there must have been a mistake because I was a conscientious objector. He smiled and asked how long I had been a CO. I showed him my draft card.

The sergeant left and came back with a slender, owl-eyed lieutenant. He said that the fact that I was a conscientious objector was, as far as the induction center was concerned, only a pencil check in a small box on page two of one of their forms. He showed me the form, and indeed it was a small box. Then the lieutenant left to check Department of Defense orders and memoranda for a precedent because he was not sure if a conscientious objector could serve in the Marine Corps.

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He returned a half hour later, a happy man. He quoted Marine Corps Order 1306.16A, Par 6C, 16 Oct 1962. It was possible for a CO to be drafted into the Marine Corps. I was not going to be a medic.

I rejoined the four others. We were taken into another room and told to stand in front of a small podium with a flag on each side. A bored-looking Air Force captain entered and said he would perform the induction and oath of allegiance ceremony. He read a presidential message about the importance of our service and then asked us to take the symbolic step forward. We did. Then he read the oath of allegiance we were to repeat after him. The oath included a line about obeying *all* legal orders, and at the time, that line bothered me. He asked if we understood the oath, and I respectfully asked him if he would repeat it to us once more. He read it again, then looked at me. I asked him if I could read it myself. While I studied the oath, the captain told the others that if an individual chose not to take it, that person would be considered a security risk and would be "peeling potatoes for two years."

I told him I was afraid I couldn't take the oath. He told me to step outside while he administered it to the other men. In the corridor, a middle-aged Red Cross volunteer came up to me. She smiled and asked if there was something wrong. I let out a gush of words about how I was a CO and I was being drafted into the Marine Corps and I just refused to take the oath of allegiance and I was beginning to get worried and this all seemed absurd. "Do what you think is right," she said, and smiling, she walked over to the New Testaments and shaving kits she would hand out to the draftees as they left the center.

The captain came out and talked at me for a couple of minutes. He said he would indicate on a special form that would be part of my record that I had refused to take the oath.

Then came two days of buses and trains to Parris Island, South Carolina. At each stop we picked up more recruits and a number of MP's with AWOL prisoners handcuffed between them. The black who had been sleeping with his mouth open ate nothing and spent a lot of time in the john. There were two other black conscripts from Cleveland—they were the ones who checked ( ) USMC. The other draftee was a middle-class kid who seemed even more apprehensive than I. There were also three baby-faced enlistees in our group.

Our Greyhound drove onto Parris Island at ten that night. A few seconds after we stopped, a staff sergeant wearing the Smokey Bear hat all drill instructors wear came on the bus and said: "You're on Parris Island. There are two ways to leave here: on a bus like this in eight or nine weeks or in a box . . . If you have any cigarettes, put them out. If you have any gum, swallow it . . . You have ten seconds to get into that building . . . Move!"

We ran across the darkness to a large, brightly lit room. There were long rows of tables, four feet from the wall, all around the room. The tables were divided by painted lines into three-foot segments which had stenciled numbers on them. The floor between the tables and walls was divided and numbered in the same way. There was an open area in the middle of the room.

Someone was yelling: "Stand on a number . . . stand on a number," and we did. Then he was yelling how we were to stand: head straight up, eyes straight ahead, arms straight down, both legs straight. The heat of the late April day was still in the room. The windows were open and you could hear crickets, bugs bouncing on the screen, and a breeze moving in the trees. Then the ugliest voice in the world said: "Number 37, I wouldn't wipe my nose again if I were you." I glanced down and saw that I was 65.

Another bus deposited its passengers around the tables, and it became silent again. Each wall had a giant red and white sign above its windows. The sign said: Recruits will not carry with them any of the following items when they leave this room:

Firearms	Drugs
Cartridges	Medicines
Explosives	Aspirin
Knives	Cough Syrup
Ice Picks	Rubbing Alcohol
Straight Razors	Deodorants
Bottles	Shaving Lotion
Brass Knuckles	Prophylactics
Cameras	Combs
Sunglasses, Jewelry, Medals	Tobacco Products
Playing Cards, Dice, Games	Matches & Lighters
Books & Magazines	Candy
Pornographic Pictures	Whiskey

A staff sergeant began pacing up and down, looking us over. His regulation haircut left him almost bald, and he had an elaborate tattoo on his arm. He began telling us how we were to behave from that moment on. The ugly voice I had heard before was his—it was low and gravelly and violent.

Recruits must stand at attention at all times. Recruits will not eyeball. Recruits will double-time everywhere. Recruits will do nothing without permission: they will not speak or swat bugs or wipe off sweat or faint without permission. Recruits will call everyone, except other recruits, "Sir." Recruits will never use the word "you" because "you" is a female sheep and there are no ewes on Parris Island. Recruits will never use the word "I" because "I" is what a recruit sees with, not what he calls himself.

After every rule, the staff sergeant would say: "Is that understood?" At first, we all shouted: "Yes, sir!"

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He couldn't hear us, he said. "YES, SIR!" That wasn't loud enough, he said. *"YES, SIR!"* He went on to the next rule.

During his speech a recruit bent over and vomited under one of the tables. The hundred and fifty of us listened to his retching. When it was quiet again, the staff sergeant mentioned that the next person who puked had better first ask for permission.

We were told to put all of our belongings, everything we weren't wearing, on top of the table. With our pants' pockets out and dangling like exposed intestines, we searched through our gear while the staff sergeant read the red and white sign to us. Forbidden items were to be thrown out onto the wooden floor. When we were done, the floor was sprinkled with broken bottles, playing cards, cans of deodorant, magazines. Then the staff sergeant and five other Marines searched through all the piles. Still, I got by with a small dictionary and a pocket chess set.

I had just finished repacking my gear when the ugly voice shouted, louder than ever, "Who's the goddam Communist named Warner?" Before I could answer, someone shouted: "Here, sir!" I couldn't see what was happening because the person was at the other end of the room, but for three minutes the staff sergeant screamed thick streams of obscenity mingled with patriotism ("You don't love this country!") and democracy ("You think you're different from the rest of us"). And the recruit was shouting back: "No, sir . . . No, sir . . . a mistake, sir!" The staff sergeant finished it by yelling louder still: "Shut your goddam mouth! . . . Don't speak unless you're asked. Is that understood?" Recruit: "Yes, sir!"

Then he said: "Is there another Warner?" I shouted yes. I heard him stomping toward me, and I made sure I was at attention as stiffly as possible.

He had apparently spent himself on the first Warner. All he said was: "Why didn't you take the loyalty oath?" I tried to look at him and that set him off again before I could say a word. "You goddam son of a bitch! You're at attention! Don't look at me, you pig . . . And don't tell me your troubles either." Then he walked away. I realized that he didn't know I was a conscientious objector. He was shouting about my refusal to take the loyalty oath!

In the next room, a fat lance corporal was cutting off everyone's hair with electric clippers. I had to go through the symbolic castration even though I was totally bald. Sitting on a stool across from the barber's chair was a wrinkled gunnery sergeant who seemed to be drunk. He was small-talking with recruits—asking where they were from, if they had any relatives in the Marine Corps—as they lost their hair. When I sat down, the barber said: "Gunny, this son of a bitch wouldn't take the oath." The Gunny asked what oath, and the barber told him. The Gunny asked me why I had done such a thing, and I said because I couldn't obey an order to kill. The Gunny said: "Son, I killed Japanese gooks. I killed Korean gooks. I killed Chinese gooks. I killed *Asian* gooks. I killed 'em all!"

When the barber was done running the clippers over my head, I ran into the next room and became one of many bald recruits sitting on rows of backless benches. We spent the next three hours being "processed": fingerprinted, photographed, dog-tagged. We sat at rigid attention and moved only when it was our turn. The anonymity was welcome, and I was able to straighten my head a bit.

At three in the morning, we were led upstairs and told to stand in front of the empty racks (bunks) there. We stood at attention until five thirty. Then we were taken to the mess hall and issued breakfast. Our civilian clothing, among the green utility uniforms of the other recruits, shamed us.

After the meal, we were taken to a warehouse. A sign above the door said that it would open at seven thirty, so we stood at silent attention for another ninety minutes. We were tired and bored and now it was getting warm.

From the warehouse we collected our basic boot camp uniform and a sack of toiletries, towels, gym gear, and miscellaneous stuff. Our civilian clothing was mailed home. We left the warehouse wearing boots, baggy utility trousers, T-shirts, and a wrinkled utility cover (cap). Over one shoulder we carried our seabags packed with what felt like fifty pounds of clothing and personal gear. It was ten thirty.

We went into a room similar to the first one we had been in the previous night. Our three drill instructors entered. They walked across the room and looked at us and shook their heads from side to side and smiled at each other. Gunnery Sergeant Gordon was the senior drill instructor: he had a fat face and a paunch that was noticeable because he walked with his shoulders thrown far back. Staff Sergeant Minior looked like Ray Bolger and had a voice like a frog. Staff Sergeant Hopkinson was small and had big ears.

Gordon told half of the room, seventy of us, to pick up our gear and follow him at the double time. It was mayhem as we all bolted for the door. Just outside, the man in front of me tripped and fell on his back. I tried to jump over him, but missed badly and I stepped squarely on his crotch. He screamed and I fell. I got back up, picked up my gear and continued; he stayed there, holding himself and moaning. I never saw him again.

I found out much later that Marine Corps training philosophy considers the next few minutes perhaps the most important minutes of boot camp. We were to be pushed hard, and the experience was to leave us all shaken. The platoon was strung out over a

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hundred yards. Our gear was heavy, we were tired, it was near ninety-degree heat, we had a half mile to run. DI's from other platoons had been requisitioned, and a dozen of them were running alongside us, shouting. I ran past a half dozen recruits who were lying next to their seabags, gulping down air. The drill instructors prodded the slow runners and tried to yank the fallen recruits to their feet. Driving slowly behind us was a Navy ambulance.

We formed up in front of what was going to be our barracks. Gordon swore at us for being slow and soft. When the ambulance arrived and a few exhausted recruits crawled from it, Gordon turned on them. They were made to do punitive exercise: side straddle hops, pushups, squat thrusts *ad nauseam.*

After a meal that few of us could touch, we were led into another warehouse. In front of each of us, on top of a long table-platform, was a mound of "7-82 gear." Walking on the top of the table was a supply sergeant. He would name a piece of equipment, and we would hold it above our heads. Then he would walk along the platform checking the condition of the gear. Above our heads went a bucket, half a pup tent, poncho, web belt, canteen, mess kit, entrenching tool, knapsacks. The last item named was a bayonet and scabbard. At that moment, for the first time, "conscientious objection" became a reality for me.

I was the only recruit not holding a bayonet above my head. The supply sergeant walked down the platform, stopped by me, and asked what the hell was wrong.

"Sir, the private will not pick up the bayonet."

"Drill Instructor Minior . . . this hog's givin' me trouble."

Minior came and stood in front of me, very close.

"Sir, Private Warner requests permission to speak to the drill instructor."

"Speak."

"Sir, the private is a conscientious objector, and the private will not bear arms. The private will not pick up the bayonet because it is a weapon, sir."

There was a silence. Then Minior said, in his frog voice, "Why'd you join my Marine Corps?"

"Sir, the private was drafted."

After a silence: "Looks like you're not a conscientious objector no more. Pick up the bayonet."

I had been unwillingly taken from my home to help wage an unjust war. All of my basic rights had been taken away—the right to urinate, to drink water, to sit—so that these rights could be returned later as rewards. I had had no sleep for over thirty hours and I had been standing at attention for almost fifteen. My chest and back itched with prickly heat, the back of my neck was becoming sunburned, my tongue seemed thick and stuck to the roof of my mouth. They had severely limited my freedom, but there was something they could not do.

"Sir, the private will not pick up the bayonet."

Gordon had walked up to us. Minior said: "Gunny, look what we got here! A pacifist in my Marine Corps!" Gordon told me to explain myself.

My voice was hollow in the warehouse. "Sir, the private believes that all men are brothers. The private will not kill one of his brothers because his government orders him to do it. The pri . . ."

Gordon reached out and squeezed my cheeks together with one hand making my lips pucker. "Enough," he said.

He led me out of the warehouse to company headquarters. Inside, I was told to stand facing a wall, my nose pressed against it. Gordon went to another room to talk to the commanding officer. Some Marines were talking behind me. "My brother lost a leg in 'Nam. And this guy says he won't fight. I hate the son of a bitch." Someone else said: "He's a Communist." Then someone hit me in the kidneys—just hard enough to let me know that they were thinking about me. It was quiet for a minute. Then I heard snickering and someone touched the tip of his cigarette to the back of my arm.

From then on, whenever I heard the floor creak, I looked over my shoulder even though I was supposed to be at attention. The Marines behind me started shuffling by and giggling at the way I looked at them. A chaplain entered the building and I jumped, which made the Marines almost laugh out loud. He asked me what was going on, and I told him someone had just burned my arm. Someone said: "Chaplain, he says he's a conscientious objector. He won't pick up a bayonet . . . We were just funnin'. A lot of people would do worse."

The chaplain had me follow him into an adjacent room. He let me sit down, but shook his head when I asked for a drink of water. He asked what denomination I belonged to and was obviously disappointed when I said "Humanist." To fill a silence, I told him I didn't understand the hate I was getting—less than 20 percent of all soldiers are infantry anyway. "It's not as simple as that," he said. "Even I carried a sidearm overseas." I told him I didn't think Christ would have carried a sidearm. He smiled and said it wasn't as simple as that. There was another long silence. After a time, he left the room. A PFC stuck his head in the door, crooked his finger at me a few times, and put me against the wall again. I was left alone.

When Gordon was done, he led me to the armory, where the platoon was drawing their rifles. I stood in the sun and waited. Gordon walked up to me and stared at the side of my face for a full two minutes. Then he walked away. A bit later, a chubby drill instructor from another platoon stood a few inches in front of me and whispered loudly: "I wish I could kill

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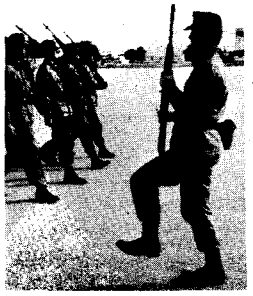
you . . . I don't know who I hate more—Communists or you . . . I have a lot more respect for a Viet Cong than I do for a pig like you."

After an hour, we returned to the barracks and began what would be a daily routine. We stood at attention and shouted as loud as we could the pages of information from our red pocket notebooks. "SIR, THE FIRST GENERAL ORDER IS. . ."

In the evening, an MP led me to the office of the company commanding officer, a first lieutenant. He was brief. "Private, I want as little to do with you as possible. You claim to be a conscientious objector; we'll see if you're lyin' or not when your record book comes in. Don't try to give conscientious objector ideas to anyone else. Consider this a warning. You've been warned . . . Leave." The MP led me back.

At eight that night we were allowed to sleep. I had vivid dreams about home. I was jarred awake by Minior kicking a trash can down the squadbay and Gordon pounding a steel chair with a stick. It was morning again, five thirty. We did punitive exercise for a half hour because we were slow getting up.



The first ten days were not official training days. We spent them filling out forms and being examined and tested. There were blocks of free time filled by our drill instructors. Most of this time was spent on the parade ground—a one-mile-long, half-mile-wide expanse of asphalt covered with gravel—practicing close-order drill. If we weren't marching, we were in the barracks practicing the manual of arms or shouting over and over the information in the red notebooks. When the platoon worked on the manual of arms, I stared at the red notebook.

Almost everyone was sick during these first days. The most common problems were colds, blistered feet, and constipation. The black who had been sleeping with his mouth open at the induction center caught pneumonia. He struggled to stay with the platoon, but eventually he collapsed. One of the young enlistees from Cleveland fainted after a long run. Minior and Hopkinson emptied a fire extinguisher on him, but he didn't move. He too disappeared.

We spent a day taking tests that were to determine our MOS (Military Occupational Specialty). This was largely a formality: 70 percent of our platoon were 0300—infantry. A bureaucratic interviewer saw that I was a college graduate and asked what I wanted to do. I figured I had no choice in the matter so I said: "Whatever I am assigned is fine." This gush of humility touched the man, and since he knew nothing about me, he said I could pick any field I wanted and he would make sure I got it. I asked for journalism.

I did well on the tests, which enraged Gordon. When he received the scores a few weeks later, he took me aside and shoved my face against the bulletin board, and said: "Warner, you're goddam smart. Why is your head so screwed up?"

For a while, I had vague hopes of being discharged. A man in our platoon was found one dawn lying under a fire escape with a broken leg and ankle. Supposedly he was sleepwalking. He was given a medical discharge. Two recruits in another platoon tried to escape through the swamp. They were easily tracked in the mud, and they went to the brig. Another man in the same platoon was released when he stuck a pencil into his eye while writing a letter home. A recruit just walked away one afternoon during close-order drill. The sun was merciless, and the parade ground shimmered with heat. Minior wasn't happy with the drilling and started us on punitive exercise. After a few minutes, the recruit stopped, looked around for the nearest shade, and walked to it. Minior shouted, but the recruit didn't look back. I don't know what happened to him, but a recruit without a platoon would be quickly nabbed by the patrolling MP's.

Each drill instructor had his own personal cadence which he sang when he marched the platoon. Minior's cadence was pretty, Gordon's was businesslike, Hopkinson's was eclectic. In the cool of the evening, when many platoons were on the parade ground practicing close-order drill, the many cadences blended together into a pleasant montage of sound.

One day Hopkinson had an idea. Instead of marching in the ranks where my lack of a rifle was noticeable, I would march in front of the platoon, carrying the guidon. It worked out fairly well for a while, but Gordon was uncomfortable with a conscientious objector carrying the platoon's flag and streamers, and I returned to my spot.

The rifle was used in the morning session of PT (Physical Training). The instructor stood on a high platform, with the company spread out below. Whenever the instructor looked at the back row, he saw me going through the motions empty-handed. Eventually he called me to the stand and asked why I never had a rifle. Minior walked up and said: "This is my unconscious objector. He won't touch a rifle." From then on, once or twice a week, the PT instructor had me on top of the platform leading the rifle drills in pantomime. It was all a mystery to the other platoons. Still, I was becoming a celebrity and getting a lot of smiles and nods in the mess hall.

If we had been "good," that is, marched sharply, hadn't whispered in the ranks, yelled loud "Yes, sirs!", there was a chance of getting a cigarette after our meals. When we returned to the barracks, we stood ramrod straight and made not a sound. If we were to be rewarded, the drill instructor would say: "Smokers, draw one." We would shout back, and it had to be loud if we wanted that smoke, "SMOKERS, DRAW ONE! AYE AYE, SIR!" On the word of the drill

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instructor, we marched out of the barracks and formed a smoking circle under a couple of old weeping willows. On the word of the drill instructor, we lit up. We stood at attention while we smoked and pretended to be looking at the red notebooks. I'd pull the smoke in as deep as I could and let it out slowly. Those cigarettes were fair approximations of orgasm.

Mail was handed out in the evening. The drill instructor on duty would read the name and flick the letter out onto the floor. I played postal chess and had a half dozen games going when I began boot camp. Almost every mail there was a postcard for me with cryptic symbols or a diagram on the back. Gordon finally asked, What the hell are they? I told him, and he asked when I played the games. I said I played them in my head during the day. From then on, whenever I made a mistake in close-order drill, Gordon would holler: "Hey, Unconscious, don't be playin' chess now!"

By the third week of training, I was almost acclimated to Parris Island; monotony laced with petty harassment. But two unexpected things were happening. First, I was developing a deep fear of the North Vietnamese soldier. It was drummed into us over and over again—Charley was tough, and he was out to get us. A number of times I woke up trembling from a terror dream. Second, the drill instructors' opinion of me was changing. They began to resent unnecessary harassment of me by other drill instructors. They were beginning to realize that I was as authentic as they were. I was a man doing what I honestly thought was right.

Not that we got along exceptionally well. A week before the rifle range, Gordon stopped our shouting from the red notebooks and told us to get ready for our first rifle class. I ran to the drill instructor's room, pounded three times on the hatch, and requested permission to speak. Then I asked to be allowed to stand outside the room during the rifle class. This infuriated Gordon. He grabbed me by my T-shirt, half ripping it off, and flung me across the room shouting a thousand obscenities which I interpreted as permission denied. I sat at the back of the room and stared at my red notebook.

Occasionally we ended our afternoon PT session by running a small obstacle course behind the barracks. The first obstacle was a straight eight-foot wall that was no problem for anyone. But on the day that we first ran the "confidence course"—ten elaborate obstacles requiring much rope climbing—my fear of heights had burned away all of my energy. Now, on the routine course, I was too tired to do much more than jump up and hold on to the top of the wall.

Minior and the PT instructor walked over. I was bumping and bouncing against the wall like a moth against a lamp. "What's the matter, Unconscious? . . . You want a ladder?" "I think I understand, Sergeant Minior. He won't bear arms and he won't climb walls." After a while, Minior told me to wait until everyone else had a chance at the wall, and then try it again. When my turn came up, I took a fine running start, but still couldn't get over the wall. Most of the platoon had finished the course and formed up next to the barracks. They silently watched. Minior and the PT instructor sat and watched my futility. Eventually they told me to fall in.

I can't say I was surprised by what happened next. Fifteen recruits whispered to me as I moved past, trying to make me feel better. I knelt down and spent some time tying my boot and cried a little. I had to do everything the other recruits did because I was *the* conscientious objector. Call it an ego trip. Call it a natural consequence of my daily struggle with the DI's. Whatever—I was a hero to the people of my platoon, and I had just failed. I think it was a defeat for all of us.

The man next to me tried to make me feel better. I remember what he said: "Listen, we're gonna have a cigarette tonight . . . Maybe you'll get a letter . . . I saw the menu and we're having steak for supper. And ice cream!"

As the days went by, the personalities of our drill instructors became distinct. Gordon was a rigid disciplinarian and quick to call for punitive exercise, but he would not allow Minior to beat recruits and did it only rarely himself. Minior was moody, took himself seriously, and had a grudge against me and "Jew Boy" and a few others. Hopkinson was the easiest to live with, and often gave us cigarettes and water when we didn't expect them. He had been conscripted into a tour of DI duty even though he was just a year or so away from retirement.

At the end of the first three weeks of training, we marched off to the rifle range. Ten hours each day, the first seven days on the range, were spent in a large circle around a barrel that had dozens of bullseyes painted on it. The recruits assumed the shooting position called out by the drill instructor and cocked and dry-fired their rifles at the barrel of bullseyes.

During all these hours of snapping in, I stood at attention, staring at my red notebook. My refusal to bear arms was starkly evident, and I might have been proud if I hadn't been swamped by the hours of boredom and sun. Sometimes Hopkinson would talk to me about the legal problems he was having. Once Gordon actually smiled at me and asked if I didn't feel like a useless piece of crap, standing around while the rest of the platoon was working hard on mastering the rifle. I told him that boot camp wouldn't last forever.

On the afternoon of June 5, the flags were at half-

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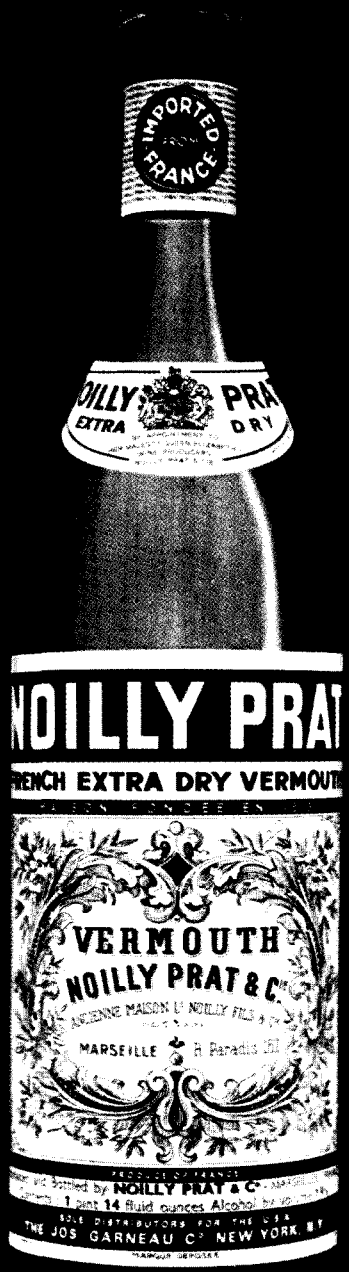
34 words on the Noilly Prat martini by W. Somerset Maugham.



"Noilly Prat is a necessary component of a dry martini. Without it you can make a side car, a gimlet, a white lady, or a gin and bitters, but you cannot make a dry martini."

"Points of View", 1958

Don't stir without Noilly Prat

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staff, although no one knew why. Gordon was sitting on the barrel of bullseyes watching the recruits in the prone position aim and fire at his head. He called me to him and said that Robert Kennedy had been assassinated. I returned to my spot in the circle and whispered the news to the man next to me. He whispered it to the next man and the word moved around the circle while everyone continued cocking and dry-firing their rifles.

During the second week, I tallied the individual shooting scores, distributed bag lunches, and tried to avoid the lieutenant in charge of the firing line, a middle-aged sergeant promoted through the ranks. His acute hatred of me even irritated Gordon.

We left the rifle range for seven days of mess duty. It was a week of honest labor, with no harassment and all we could eat. I saw firsthand that no saltpeter was put into the food.

I watched the platoons of new recruits in the mess hall. Even when they lost their civilian clothing they were recognizable because the sun had not yet tanned the top of their heads. Their faces were harried and depressed, and they didn't eat much. It brought back unpleasant memories.

When we finished mess duty, Gordon marched us back to the barracks and immediately started us on two hours of punitive exercise. He sat in a chair on top of a table in the middle of the barracks. He puffed on a cigar and watched the pools of sweat growing around us. We had gone soft in the week of easy living, he said, and he wanted to remind us that there were still two weeks to go on Parris Island. When he thought we'd had enough, he had us march around the barracks with our hands in our pockets, whistling and strolling "like civilians." Then, as we walked in the large circle, he ordered us to start laughing. We did, and something funny happened. Laughter is contagious, and in a few seconds, we were all laughing for real. And this louder laughter made us laugh harder. Gordon began to laugh himself. We had a hard time stopping.

We spent most of the last two weeks practicing our marching and being fitted for our dress uniforms. Once, a group of Marines administered a few hours of proficiency tests to our company. Some of the tests were on the rifle and pistol, and I failed them. I was told, although I knew they were lying, that I would be "sent back" and have to repeat a few weeks of boot camp. When Gordon heard this, he stormed over to the proctors and began yelling. "How the hell is he supposed to pass a test on the rifle? Goddamit! He's a conscientious objector. Don't you people understand that?"

One afternoon, we spent some time marching before judges to determine which platoon was the best at drill. We won, and Gordon was presented with a bronzed combat boot.

Since the first days of boot camp, we had been warned about the PRT (Physical Readiness Test) we would take during the last week. This would be our initiation into the Marine Corps, the bridge that many recruits would never cross. At least that's what we were told. Actually the PRT was not difficult, and all Marines pass it routinely four times each year. But there are many impressionable kids in boot camp, and they were psyched.

We climbed some ropes in full gear, carried one another over our shoulders for a while, crawled a lot. The drill instructors kept one eye on the proctors and let us cheat as much as we could, which had the effect of making the PRT seem even more difficult. Then came the last hurdle: a three-mile run in full gear—steel helmet, boots, pack, rifle.

Everyone was grim. Our commanding officer, also in full gear, ran in front of the company. Gordon was in front of our platoon, next to the guidon bearer. We ran silently for a while. The only sounds were heavy breathing and boots hitting the ground. Then Gordon started us on our chants: "Here we go-o! HERE WE GO-O! Long Road! LONG ROAD! Hard Road! HARD ROAD! Won't Stop! WON'T STOP! Gimme More! GIMME MORE! Marine Corps! MARINE CORPS!"

Two or three recruits were having a hard time. They had run the distance many times before, but now they gasped for air and stumbled trying to keep up. Other recruits took turns carrying their rifles, their pack, and even their helmets. If the stragglers continued to fade, they were held up by the arms, even carried. For a brief moment, I found myself holding a rifle; I traded it for a pack. The point was, the platoon kept on running, and no one was left behind. We had learned our lesson.

When it was over, everybody was grins and backslapping. Gordon, sweating more than I had ever seen before, came into the barracks and gave us a small smile and said: "*Marines* . . . take a shower." It was the first time he had ever called us that. That night, we sat in front of our racks and Gordon read to us our assigned MOS's. Two thirds of the platoon was 0300. I was a "broadcast journalist." One of the baby-faced enlistees from Cleveland was crying in the evening shower as the water flowed down his face. He was 0300 and was scared.

On the afternoon before we "graduated," we returned the buckets of 7-82 gear. As we were leaving for the warehouse, Minior discovered there was one bayonet too many. He asked who was missing one, and somebody said that it must belong to Warner.

Minior walked up to me and said in his frog voice: "If I put it in your bucket, will you carry it back? . . . Please." I consented.

On July 5, we graduated. Parents and relatives

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were allowed to visit. After two hours of ceremonies, marching, and speeches, we were given base liberty—our first freedom in eight weeks. I went to the library and read *Time* magazines, I telephoned home, I enjoyed the luxurious privacy of a pay toilet, I gorged in the snack bar. I happened to walk past Gordon that afternoon, and as in a scene from a bad 1940s movie, he stopped and gave me a stiff salute.

That night, after lights were out, Gordon paced the dark squadbay and talked to us. He was not articulate, and his words came slowly. There were many creaks of the floorboards between his sentences.

"In the morning you'll be gone, and I want to say a few things now 'cause we won't have time tomorrow . . . You done a good job . . . I'm proud to have been your senior drill instructor . . . I really am . . . There were hard times here. There're hard times comin' . . . Maybe the war is wrong. Maybe we all don't agree with what we're supposed to do. But I know all of you are gonna do what you have to do . . . Charley is a tough soldier. Sure you're afraid of him. You better be afraid of him! . . . Just don't forget we're one hell of a lot tougher . . . Don't ever forget that . . . It hurts me to think that some of you are gonna be dead in a few months. But some of you *are* gonna be dead . . . A lot of Marines who slept in this barracks, maybe in the rack you're in right now, are dead . . . A lot of my recruits are dead, I know that . . . They listened to me talk like this on their last night on Parris Island, and they died a couple of months later . . ."

He talked on for a half hour. There was none of the usual whispering when he left. The next morning, at 6 A.M., we boarded buses. Gordon shook hands with each one of us and wished us good luck. They say a man never forgets his senior drill instructor. I smile when I think about Gordon—he was actually crying as we boarded the Greyhounds.

The second half of basic training was at Camp Geiger in Jacksonville, North Carolina. Infantry had eight grim and joyless weeks in front of them. Noninfantry had four weeks. All of the time was to be spent on weapons training.

We arrived at Camp Geiger on Saturday and did nothing over the weekend except unpack our seabags. Monday morning, three tough-looking troop handlers, wearing sunglasses and carrying billy clubs, entered our barracks. The first thing out of their mouth was: "Where is Warner?" I hollered and they came to me. One of them put the tip of his billy club close to my face and yelled that he hated me and that I was a coward. Then he turned to the man next to me, who happened to be a good friend, and said: "Would you go out of your way to help a shit like him?" My friend said: "Yes, sir!" The troop handler asked the man on the other side of me the same question and got the same answer. He thought about it for a second, then told me to take my gear and find a good place to sleep in the latrine "with the other shits." While I stuffed my seabag, a gunnery sergeant came into the barracks and told me to collect my back pay and get a clean uniform ready. I was being sent home for the customary twenty days of leave.

The platoon left the barracks to be issued their 7-82 gear and rifles. I never saw any of them again. At six that evening, I was on an airplane sipping bourbon.

The rest of my military career was anticlimactic. After training for my MOS, I spent nineteen months at the Marine Corps Air Station in Jacksonville, North Carolina. I worked as a journalist for the base newspaper. A few days before I was promoted to corporal, a message came from Washington saying that a mistake had been made in assigning me the MOS of journalist. I had refused to kill and therefore could not be trusted. My MOS was changed to "clerk," and I spent the rest of my tour, almost a year, as a librarian. I was honorably discharged on April 29, 1970.

I recently sent a letter to Marine Corps Headquarters asking how many 1A-O's have served in the Corps, but never received an answer. I'm sure there were others. Marine Corps Order 1306.16A, Par 6C, 16 Oct 1962 has been rescinded however. And the Marine Corps is no longer drafting recruits, so it will be a while before another 1A-O visits Parris Island.

I went through boot camp without any scars because I was five years older than the average recruit, I was a college graduate, which is a rarity for enlisted Marines, I was intelligent and verbal, I could meet the physical demands, and my drill instructors were mature and humane men. I wonder if other 1A-O's were as fortunate.

Now that it's over, I can actually say I was lucky to have been drafted into the Marine Corps. Few men have had the opportunity I had to live a commitment. My responsibility toward the men of the platoon was considerable. I was a symbol of what they could do if they wanted to. I was a symbol of our right to dissent. If I had given in and taken up a rifle, the system would have defeated all of us and I think even the drill instructors would have been disappointed.

Some of the men from the platoon are dead, maybe a few have forgotten me. But I think most will remember the conscientious objector who went through boot camp with them. To that extent at least, I made a mark on the Marine Corps.

For all of its faults, the Marine Corps still is an honorable service. Maybe I wasn't proud wearing the uniform, but I was never ashamed. If my son *has* to serve in the military, I hope he serves in the United States Marine Corps, like his father. The Marine Corps has left its mark on me. □

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IN THE TOILS OF THE LAW

by Edward Hoagland

On jury duty, everyone tries hard to be fair; some try hard to be fair to the defendant, some to the plaintiff.

Lately people seem to want to pigeonhole themselves ("I'm 'into' this, I'm 'into' that"), and the anciently universal experiences like getting married or having a child, like voting or jury duty, acquire a kind of poignancy. We hardly believe that our vote will count, we wonder whether the world will wind up uninhabitable for the child, but still we do vote with a rueful fervor, and look at new babies with undimmed tenderness, because these old humane responsibilities—who knows what will become of them?

Jury duty. Here one sits listening to evidence: thumbs up for a witness or thumbs down. It's unexpectedly moving, everybody tries so hard to be fair; for their two weeks of duty people really try to be better than themselves. In Manhattan, 1800 are called each week from the voters' rolls. A third of them show up and qualify, this third being divided at a later date into three groups of 200, one for the State Supreme Court of New York County, one for the Criminal Court, and one for the Civil Court. I was sent to the Civil Court, 111 Centre Street, right across from the Tombs.

The building is relatively modern, the chairs are upholstered as in an airport lounge, and the group of 200 faces forward like a school of fish, waiting for the roll to be called. It's very much like waiting six or seven hours a day for an unscheduled flight to take off. People read, watch the clock, strike up a conversation, dictate business letters into the pay telephones. When I served, one man in a booth was shouting, "I'll knock your teeth down your throat! I don't want to hear, I don't want to know!"

Women are exempt from jury duty if they wish to be because of their sensibilities, their menstrual delicacy, and the care they must give their babies, so usually not many come. Instead there are lots of retired men and institutional employees from banks, the Post Office, or the Transit Authority whose bosses won't miss them, and people who are at loose ends and welcome the change. Some look extremely busy, too, rush right to the office when given a chance and otherwise sit at the tables at the front of the room, trying to keep up with their work. They'll write payroll checks, glancing to see if you notice how important they are; or pore over statistical charts, or over contact sheets with a magnifying glass, if they are in public relations, to pick the best pictures of clients.

Once in a while a clerk emerges to rotate a lottery box and draw names of jurors, who go into one of the challenge rooms—six jurors, six alternates—to be interviewed by the plaintiff's and defendant's lawyers. In civil cases, unless the damages asked are large, the jury has only six members, only five of whom must agree on a decision, and since no one is going to be sentenced to jail, the evidence for a decision need merely seem "preponderant," not "beyond a reasonable doubt." Selecting a jury is the last little battle of nerves for the opposing attorneys. By now they know who will testify, have obtained pretrial depositions, and this completes the "hand" which each of them holds. Generally they think they know what will happen, and they settle the case either before the hearing starts or out of the jury's earshot, with the judge's help, during the hearing to save time and costs. Seeing a good sober jury waiting to hear them attempt to justify a bad case greases the wheels.

In the challenge room, though, the momentum of confrontation goes on. With a crowded court calendar, the judge in these civil cases is not present as a rule. It's a small room; there's an opportunity for the lawyers to be folksy or emotional in ways not permitted to them later on. For instance, the plaintiff's attorney in asking the jurors again and again if they "can convert pain and suffering into dollars and cents" is preparing the ground for his more closely supervised presentation in court. By asking them if they own any stock in an insurance company he can get across the intelligence, which is verboten otherwise, that not the humble "defendant" but some corporation is going to have to pick up the tab. His opponent will object if he tells too many jokes and wins too many friends, but both seek not so much a sympathetic jury as a jury that is flushed free of nuts and

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grudge-holders, a jury dependably ready to give everybody "his day in court"—a phrase we heard over and over. The questioning we were subjected to was so polite as to be almost apologetic, however, because of the danger of unwittingly offending any of the jurors who remained. It was hard work for these lawyers, having to size up a series of strangers in a few minutes on the basis of some monosyllabic answers and each fellow's face, profession, and listed address. Everybody was on best behavior, the jurors too, because the procedure so much resembled a job interview.

The six alternates sat listening. The lawyers could look at them and draw any conclusions about character they wished but could not question any of them until a sitting juror had been challenged, or know in advance which one of the alternates would be brought forward first. Each person was asked about his work, about any special knowledge or honest bias he might have concerning cases of the same kind or any lawsuits he may have been involved in himself at one time. Some questions were probably partly designed to educate us in the disciplines of objectivity, lest we think it was all too easy—one or two lawyers made an effort actually to educate us in the majesty of the law, since, as they said, the judges sometimes are "dingbats" and do not. We were told there should be no opprobrium attached to being excused, that we must not simply assume a perfect impartiality in ourselves but should help them examine us. Jailhouse advocates, or Spartan souls who might secretly believe that the injured party should swallow his misfortune and grin and bear a stroke of bad luck, of course were to be avoided, along with the mingy, the flippant, the scornful, the grieved, and the wronged; and men who might want to redistribute the wealth of the world by finding for the plaintiff, or who might not limit their deliberations to deciding the facts of the case, accepting the judge's interpretation of the law as the law. We were told that our common sense and experience of life were what was wanted, to sift out the likelihood of what we heard.

Most dismissals occurred just because of a lawyer's hunch—his not liking the cut of a juror's mouth, or figuring the percentages as baseball managers do. After the first day, waiting in the airport lounge—looking ahead to two weeks of that—there wasn't anybody who didn't want to get on a case. Even listening silently as an alternate in the challenge room was a relief. I dressed in a suit and tie and got my shoes shined. I'd been afraid that when I said I was a novelist, no lawyer would have me, on the theory that novelists favor the underdog, but on the contrary, I was accepted every time. Apparently a novelist was considered ideal, having no allegiances at all, no expertise, no professional link to the workaday world. I stutter and had supposed, too, that that would disqualify me—I saw homosexuals disqualified whenever their mannerisms gave them away. But, no, although to me a stutter in its way is as suspicious an ailment as homosexuality or alcoholism, these lawyers did not think it so. What they seemed to want was simply a balanced group, because when a jury gets down to arguing, there's no telling where its leadership will arise. The rich man from Sutton Place whom the plaintiff's lawyer had almost dismissed, fearing he'd favor the powers that be, might turn out to be a fighting liberal whose idea of what constitutes proper damages is very much higher than what the machinist who sits next to him had in mind. In one case I heard about, a woman was clonked by a Christmas tree in a department store and the juror whose salary was lowest suggested awarding her $50, and the man who earned the most, $50,000 (they rounded it off to $1500). This is the kind of case that Sancho Panza did so well on when he was the governor of Isle Barataria, and as I was questioned about my prejudices, and, solemnly looking into each lawyer's eyes, shook my head, murmuring no, no prejudices, all the time naturally my true unreliable quirky perverseness filled my head. All I could do was resolve to try to be fair.

We'd struck up shipboard friendships by now. There was a babbling camaraderie in the jury pool, and for lunch we plunged into that old eclipsed ethnic New York near City Hall—Chinese roast ducks hanging in the butcher's windows on Mulberry Street and next door an Italian store selling religious candles—like the melting pot of story and song. We ate at Cucina Luna and Giambone's. Eating at Ping Ching's, we watched whole pigs, blanched white, delivered at the door. We watched an Oriental funeral, with Madame Nhu, the director, waving the limousines on. The deceased's picture, heaped with flowers, was in the lead car, and all his beautiful daughters wept with faces disordered and their long black hair streaming down.

As an alternate I sat in on the challenges for a rent-a-car case, with four lawyers representing the different parties, each of whom liked to hear himself talk. The theme was that we were all New Yorkers and therefore streetwise and no fools. The senior fellow seemed to think that all his years of trying these negligence penny-ante affairs had made him a very good lawyer indeed, whereas my impression was that the reason he was still trying them after so many years was that he was rather bad. Then the same afternoon I got on a jury to hear the case of a cleaning woman of sixty-four, who had slipped on the floor of a Harlem ballroom in 1967 and broken her ankle.

Before the trial had gotten very far, the proceedings were interrupted while motions were heard in another case, and we sat alone in a jury room, trading reading material, obeying the injunction that we not discuss the case, until we were called back in and thanked pleasantly by the judge—"they also serve who stand and wait." He said our presence next door

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as a deliberative body, passive as we were, had pressured a settlement. It was for $750, a low figure to me (the court attendant told me there had been some legal flaw in the plaintiff's case), but some of the other jurors thought she'd deserved no money at all. They were trying to be fair to the ballroom man. That's what these disputes boiled down to: one juror trying to be fair to one person, another to another.

Friday of the first week I got on a jury to hear the plight of a woman who had been standing at the front of a bus and had been thrown forward and injured when she stooped after some change that had spilled from her purse. The bus company's lawyer was a jovial, ruddy sort. "Anybody here have a bone to pick with our New York City buses?" We all laughed and said no, that we were capable of sending her away without any award if she couldn't prove negligence, but he settled with her attorney immediately, within minutes after we'd left the challenge room. (These attorneys did not necessarily run to type. There was a lawyer for the Transit Authority who shouted like William Kunstler—five times the judge had an officer ask him to sit down, and once he threatened to have the poor chap bound to his chair.)

With cases in progress all over the building, the jury pool had thinned out so that no sooner were we dropped back into it than our names were called once again. Even one noteworthy white-haired fellow who was wearing a red velvet jump suit, a dragon-colored coat, and a gold talisman dangling on a chain had some cases to talk about.

Lunches . . . walks in the Civic Center. I was reviewing two books and finding that I could concentrate on them in the midst of the hubbub better than I might have under easier circumstances at home.

My ticket was drawn for another case. A woman carrying a one-year-old child had been knocked down (or said she had) by a parked car that suddenly backed up. Her attorney was a fighting machine, a fighting bantam—put him in a room and he would fight. His face in its heavy head flushed dark; one could see him as a child having temper tantrums. Combative as he was, when he wasn't raging he exuded geniality—genuinely wanted to be liked. Warm and then *hot.* Warm and *hot.* He whispered forensically. He was another of these very experienced attorneys working for a contingency fee and sure that by now in his career he knew a great deal about human nature and how to manipulate it, though in fact there was clearly some disastrous flaw in his judgment of people that he would never suspect or discover. Call him Fein (not his name).

His adversary—a word he used with a smile, introducing Mr. Lahey (not *his* name)—was a man who did not like to fight. A ruined, short-nosed, Irish drinker with a big seedy body, a bloated face, he held his hands tightly clasped to his chest, or pushed them down hard on the table to keep them from shaking. He could no longer look anyone in the eye, not even the jury, and instead cast his gaze forlornly heavenward when he made his summation, which, since his glasses magnified his pupils, was quite distressing. Besides feeling for him, I had the impression that he had not been a bad advocate in the beginning. As it was, he scarcely spoke in the challenge room, only shook his head when he wished to object to the other man's tactics. "You object?" Fein asked. Lahey nodded. Fein seemed fond of him nevertheless, with that affection that compulsive gladiators have for opponents who furnish the chance for a tussle, though his face lost its winning smile and flushed pugnaciously whenever he looked from us to him.

Lahey, who really seemed to know a little more law, so that even his minimal, unhappy, purely defensive efforts had some effect, did not return this friendship; even asking us questions was burdensome to him. Fein was going on and on unimpeded in the challenge room, where the judge wouldn't intervene, about the suffering of this mother and tiny child—"But we don't want sympathy!" he said. "No," Lahey snickered. "You just want cash." Fein, flushing plum-red, told us in an almost permissibly roundabout fashion that Lahey wasn't the insurance company's regular representative but just an "off-counsel."

He challenged a director of CIT, who may have been the richest man in the whole jury pool, and exercised another hunch or two, then got around to asking about insurance stocks. Two of us, an IBM man and I, put up our hands as holders of bits of ITT, which has insurance interests. Lahey objected, however, silently shaking his head, to everyone being

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cast off the jury whose connection with the industry was as slender as that. They went upstairs so the judge could rule. The judge ruled for Lahey, apparently, and told them that only one of the two of us could now be challenged on peremptory grounds; so Fein had to choose. He looked back and forth. The IBM man wore a rep tie and had hair that was as black and neat as his shoes. I wanted to stay on the jury so I laid on my lap the books I was reviewing, which had identifying labels on them from the New York *Times,* figuring that a plaintiff's attorney, if he had to choose between IBM and the *Times,* would pick the *Times.* That's what he did, looking sheepishly but dramatically at me and stressing that I must be fair enough to ignore the resentment a juror is likely to feel toward a lawyer who wants him off the jury.

So our jury consisted of me, a black bus driver who looked like Flip Wilson, a well-dressed real estate man who was carrying the *Wall Street Journal* and reading a skiing magazine, a brogue-speaking retired bank teller ("paying teller"), who said that he'd worked his way up at the bank from sweeping the floor, a cabdriver, formerly a bartender, who looked like the map of New York and had lived all over it and was a philosopher, and a headwaiter.

The court attendant who led us upstairs was chuckling because he'd fixed the judge's wagon at lunch. The judge had sent him out for a sandwich and coffee, and in order to teach him not to do that again, he'd brought back two sandwiches instead of one, the wrong kind of sandwiches, and no cream in the coffee. He was a limping veteran. The judge was an adequate little man who sometimes stood up, as lawyers do, in order to speak. His mode with the jury was like that of an optometrist explaining something to a customer. He was a stickler but always polite to the other participants too, though his job seemed perhaps to have lost its interest for him. Basically, no doubt, he was an impatient man, but by sixty had mastered this by hedging himself in with the precision of his job, by cramming his face with exaggeratedly pleasant expressions instead of scowling, and by whispering instructions as quietly as possible when he wanted to shout.

The plaintiff, being questioned about events that had occurred two years ago, screwed up her face and squinted determinedly when cross-examined, making a decided distinction between the lawyer who was working for her and the lawyer opposed. She was West Indian, dark, in her early thirties, not so much pretty as sensuous-looking, with an odalisque's walk and a thick coif of hair. Her baby, now three years old, was with her, asleep, snoring softly on a court bench. She compressed her lips with the force of her concentration after each answer she gave, and like the defendant—who was a private security guard, light-skinned, as lean as a knife, wearing his pistol and handcuffs right in court—she had probably been coached. They each bumbled in their testimony, however, and since the six of us on the jury turned out to be divided evenly, three against three, as to whom to believe, we kept reverting to those bungles.

She said that in crossing a street empty of traffic she had walked behind his parked car, which lurched back abruptly, knocking her screaming onto the sidewalk and throwing the child out of her arms. She said that she'd gone to the doctor seventeen times for her contusions and for medication, massages and heat treatment of her shoulders and neck, and had taken the baby ten times. But she hadn't had X rays, and she'd walked directly home to her other children and not gone to the hospital for emergency treatment right away. Her main mistake was to tell us that she'd not heard the car's engine and that she "would have" if it had been running. How could she have been hit if the motor wasn't running? There goes her case right there, said the jurors who were afraid the insurance company was going to be bilked.

The man said that while it was true that he was sitting in his car at the wheel, he had not started it and the car did not move. The first thing he knew, out of the blue, this lady rapped on his door claiming that she was bleeding and that he'd backed into her; maybe, he said, she'd tripped on the curb. *His* blunder, which struck me as less a matter of verbiage than of veracity, was to give conflicting accounts of the distance he was from the nearest parked car. The avenue stretched downhill, and at first he said that he'd had plenty of room even just to coast away from where he was without backing up if he'd wanted to move. Then it turned out that there was a car immediately in front of him. He was not a licensed driver, had only a learner's permit, and was driving without the licensed chaperon required by law. When the woman knocked on the door of his car to claim that he'd hit her (she'd said that he'd gotten hastily out of his car as soon as she screamed), he gave her his name and address, offered to drive her to a hospital, and then went across the street to get the girlfriend whom he had been visiting as a witness; but the two of them had since broken up and she wasn't in court.

Fein at one point managed to inform us that Lahey had been afraid the defendant himself wouldn't put in an appearance, but instead his own client's doctor was absent, so that Fein, who had been asking $10,000 damages each for the mother and child, felt it best to reduce his claim for the child's sufferings to $4000. He was asking $1000 additionally for the husband's loss of "consortium and services," which he gave us to understand meant sexual intercourse; the judge in his charge enlarged it to include "fellowship." The stenographer, a mannered young man with a Roman haircut, had completely forgotten to come back after lunch to transcribe the charge and had to be summoned. The charge was a good conscientious one, however, and no longer mouthed with exaggerated facial expressions as if we on the jury

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were visitors from the UN. I'd come to like both Fein and the judge—Fein as a next-door neighbor whose barbecue smoke one would share, along with his pride in his kids and their attainments, his delight in friendship that bridged arguments. He tried to fasten our eyes to his as he summed up, speaking as hoarsely as though the trial had lasted for weeks, letting his voice sink and rise.

Then we were alone. We settled around the long table, designed for a jury of twelve, in postures elaborately casual, as if we expected to battle a bit, the way movie juries do. The man who had been reading the skiing magazine had dressed in loafers and chinos and a sport jacket today, and in educated accents he took the lead. He said the woman hadn't organized her thoughts and her case properly. Otherwise she wouldn't have made the mistake of saying that the car which supposedly hit her wasn't running—if your case isn't organized properly you don't deserve to win it. He had property on Long Island and in Vermont and insurance premiums were too high. Also why didn't the street fill up with witnesses if she had screamed?

The peppy paying teller, an endearing fellow, didn't like the idea of paying out money on the unsubstantiated word of a woman without enough sense to get X rays. He regarded the gun and handcuffs that the driver wore as a sort of character reference, too, because in his line of work such licensed guards were reliable. He and the cabbie had been at home with each other all along, being nearly contemporaries, telling jokes to each other during every recess, he in an Abbey Theatre brogue and the cabbie in the accents of the Lower East Side; but the cabbie, like me, though we didn't actually come out and say so, had been leery of the pistol and cuffs. The cabbie had lived in East New York, where the accident had occurred—just as he'd lived in every other known neighborhood at one time—and he explained to the man who was relaxing in chinos that the neighborhood was very tough and didn't fill up with witnesses just because a girl screamed.

The teller suggested that the girl had been jaywalking. The cabbie and I stressed that the driver was driving illegally, didn't know how to drive in the first place, and that apart from his driving abilities we had difficulty believing him—did they really think that this woman had stumbled on the curb, skinned herself, and simply looked around for the nearest person in a parked car to sue? If this character saw he was being set up like that, why hadn't he called the police? But we want justice here, said the teller; one-to-one testimony was no proof, and he was doubtful of her. I said that nobody was going to jail, no one was going to be fined, this was a civil case in which the evidence need only be preponderant.

The bus driver, who was wary, alone with these five white men, and had already been hearing some jokes about "witch doctors" in reference to the West Indian, had postponed giving his views. Now, nervously, speaking faster, edging into a position of sympathy with the woman, he raised the interesting question, Why would this tough guy with his pistol and cuffs meekly hand over his name and address and learner's permit to a woman who without reason tapped on his window for the plain purpose of victimizing him in a fraud? Why would he do this if he hadn't hit her?

The headwaiter, having waited us out, now said heatedly that he didn't trust any woman—just wouldn't believe her—that he "just used them and discarded them." He made a tossing motion like throwing a piece of toilet paper into the john. His putative allies were a little bit taken aback, and I said (since I was providing the heat on our side) that if he'd told that to the lawyers downstairs, he wouldn't be here. He was a stiff, large, unusual man, a German, who pinned his ears tight to his head with the temple pieces of his glasses. In the challenge room he'd seemed like something of a caricature to me. When asked by the lawyers if he could drive, he answered that he drove "only in Germany" and that as a European he always accepted authority.

We were released at five because the judge had a dental appointment. Arriving again at ten the next morning, we found ourselves still lined up three to three. Just as the cabbie philosopher was more effective in arguing with the teller, I was best with the man who was relaxing this week in his chinos, being the same age and from a background that he considered comparable to his own. He put his *Time* magazine and *Wall Street Journal* on the table, and I countered with my review books with their New York *Times* labels. He complained in accents I remembered from prep school about the amount Fein would receive from any settlement we gave to the woman, and I brought in how much these insurance lawyers were paid in a state like New York which lacks no-fault insurance. All of us recapitulated our reasoning. As the time passed, though, our side turned out to be more solidly aligned. For one thing, our sympathies were at least partly involved; we had the confidence and expertise of two professional drivers stiffening our will; and the headwaiter in his black suit began to lapse into what might best be described as psychodrama. He said the reason he never believed any woman was that once one had accused him of indecent exposure, "showing his peeno"—and thereupon began to imitate masturbation in a vigorous way. He stood up too and paced, though there was no room for pacing, and showed the placement of a hernia scar that he had, the hernia having occurred while he was waiting on a governor's party of eight with heavy silver service, and had tried to carry the entire main course on one tray in order to spread it out all at once in the grandest and swiftest fashion.

Other people also spoke personally. The bus

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driver, who was still wary of what one of the rest of us might say, with both the plaintiff and defendant Negroes, mentioned times when fakers on the street had tried to stage incidents by which to sue him, making it plain that this story did not strike him as of the same kind. The cabbie had once hit a girl on roller skates while hurrying home for Rosh Hashanah services on the Lower East Side. The retired teller had ten grandchildren, he wanted us to know (the cabbie had six), and was not an unfeeling man—which no one had thought; he was a dear; he simply was not used to giving out money so freely. The fellow in chinos told us about a friend of his who had driven down Park Avenue drunk one night and hit three policemen. Although he was insured for $500,000, the jury awarded them $1.3 million and he was bankrupted. All of us, who might not have spent five minutes actually helping the woman at the scene if we had been witnesses, were invested with the solemnity of the law and were spending what added up to five hours in these deliberations.

But the night's sleep had made my friend the skier more amenable. Breaking the solidarity of his side, he offered to let the woman have $1000, not because he believed her but as a compromise. I'd suggested $2000 for her and $1000 for the child, the cabbie had said $2000 and $500, and the bus driver $1500 and $500. I said that if there had been any independent medical evidence, we'd probably be asking for more and that if we had wanted to bargain we could have walked in suggesting a figure double what we were ready to settle for. Her lawyer, after all, had first asked for ten times what we had in mind.

Now the cabbie really came into his own. In luckier days he had managed a taxi company operating 450 cabs, and in that soothing manner of his he began to recount the details of a dozen, two dozen, three dozen accident cases out of the countless assortment he'd dealt with, saying that the standard out-of-court settlement was five or six times the doctor's bills, saying that he was convinced an accident had occurred, that the learner-driver, scared because he was driving illegally, had begun by lying in his report to the police and was lying still. With the broad hospitable benignity of the old melting pot, for an hour or more he kept quietly filling in every silence with authentic street stories about New York accidents, making it all seem less exceptional to us, bringing it into perspective as a business risk for the companies involved. For every three cabs in a fleet, he said, $100 a week in insurance money was set aside to pay claims like this. In counterpoint to him, and maybe almost as effective in reducing the resistance of the other side, the headwaiter in his violinist's suit was striding along one wall of the narrow room doing unaccompanied sonatas in a hollow voice of a sort that might have been interesting to scientists on the other side of one-way glass. It was an interior monologue, not without pathos. No, he wouldn't give any woman such an award.

The man relaxing in chinos, being a good fellow, agreed to come up to $2000 if we who were above would come down. We did on condition that the teller would not require us to go lower. He was the foreman—the foreman is simply the man assigned to Seat Number 1—and remained wholeheartedly against any money being paid out. We recognized that in a practical sense we were a five-man, not a six-man, jury, and that unanimity would be required. The man in chinos observed sarcastically that the baby didn't need money for candy and should no more receive a payment than the husband who claimed he hadn't been able to screw his wife for a couple of weeks. But I said that the baby had bled like anyone else, that you didn't have to be voting age to suffer (the judge had refused to allow Fein to claim "psychic scars"). I said my first memory was of a train wreck, but didn't add that the memory seemed rather a happy one, because we were debating now, trying to score points, not even pretending to listen to one another judiciously.

The cabbie kept talking that legendary, big-hearted, big-city talk about every man getting a break, about generosity, a New York open to the masses of an older world. It was an unequal contest. By bringing in his six grandchildren he got the teller started again on his ten, and, by and by, the teller gave in, first to the extent of $1000, then $1500, then $2000. He was so exasperated he wanted to give half of it to the child just to spite the mother, and I, still resenting Fein's attempt to dismiss me from the jury, just as Fein had suspected I would, thought that sounded good because the cabbie had told us lawyers got less of a cut from money awarded to minors. The man in chinos shrugged and went along; so that we'd reached our decision. We patted each other, brothers after the struggle. "No!" said the headwaiter firmly in court when we were polled, not so ready to knuckle under as I'd imagined.

The last day or two, the jury pool swelled again to the original crowd of two hundred; people sitting in tête-à-têtes chatting. When a new case was called, nobody except the postmen and Transit Authority employees wanted to take the chance of being chosen for it and perhaps held over. One man told the lawyers that, frankly, he was sick and tired of hearing about auto accidents. I raised my hand and said I owned some ITT shares and would thus be biased in favor of the insurance company. There was a sense of satisfaction, repletion, at having seen some action, done some service.

I got home that Friday with a stamped receipt for ten days' work at $12 a day, and found in my mail a stringent official warning that I must appear immediately at New York's County Court House to explain why I hadn't shown up when called for jury duty and why contempt proceedings should not therefore be instituted against me. My answering note was lusciously righteous. □

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ACADEMIC IGNORANCE AND BLACK INTELLIGENCE

by William Labov

The controversy over why children in the inner-city schools show such low educational achievement has been examined in several recent issues of The Atlantic. *In the September, 1971,* Atlantic, *R. J. Herrnstein summarized the position of psychologists and others who believe that heredity is substantially more important than environment in determining intelligence, as measured by IQ tests. In its issue of December, 1971,* The Atlantic *published a number of letters (the correspondents included sociologists, anthropologists, economists, educators, and a few psychologists) taking issue with Professor Herrnstein's article. Many of those who wrote maintained that environmental factors, rather than any genetic deficit, explain the poor performance of lower-class inner-city children.*

A third position held by linguists and many anthropologists locates the problem not in the children, but in the relations between them and the school system. This position holds that inner-city children do not necessarily have inferior mothers, language, or experience, but that the language, family style, and ways of living of inner-city children are significantly different from the standard culture of the classroom, and that this difference is not always properly understood by teachers and psychologists. Linguists believe that we must begin to adapt our school system to the language and learning styles of the majority in the inner-city schools. They argue that everyone has the right to learn the standard languages and culture in reading and writing (and speaking, if they are so inclined); but this is the end result, not the beginning of the educational process. They do not believe that the standard language is the only medium in which teaching and learning can take place, or that the first step in education is to convert all first-graders to replicas of white middle-class suburban children.

This article grew out of my own attempt to state the linguistic position on these issues at a Georgetown Round Table in 1968. While psychologists are obviously divided, linguists find (somewhat to their own surprise) that they all agree. My own statement here is based on research carried out in South Central Harlem from 1965 to 1968 by a team of two white and two black investigators, supported by the Office of Education. Our aim was to describe the differences between the standard English of the classroom and the vernacular language used by members of the street culture. We carried out long-term participant-observation with a number of black adolescent peer groups: the Jets, the Cobras, the Thunderbirds, the Aces, the Oscar Brothers. Their dialect will be referred to below as the Black English Vernacular (BEV). *It is a remarkably consistent grammar, essentially the same as that found in other cities: Detroit, Chicago, Philadelphia, Washington, San Francisco, Los Angeles, New Orleans. It is important to note that this Black English Vernacular is only a small part of what might be called "Black English." Black Americans do not, of course, speak a single dialect, but a wide range of language forms that cover the continuum between this vernacular and the most formal literary English.* —W. L.

In the past decade, a great deal of federally sponsored research has been devoted to the educational problems of children in ghetto schools. To account for the poor performance of children in these schools, educational psychologists have tried to discover what kind of disadvantage or defect the children are suffering from. The viewpoint which has been widely accepted and used as the basis for large-scale intervention programs is that the children show a cultural *deficit* as a result of an impoverished environment in their early years. A great deal of attention has been given to language. In this area, the deficit theory appears as the notion of "verbal deprivation": black children from the ghetto area are said to receive little verbal stimulation, to hear very little well-formed language, and as a result are impoverished in their means of verbal expression. It is said that they cannot speak complete sentences, do not know the names of common objects, cannot form concepts or convey logical thoughts.

Unfortunately, these notions are based upon the work of educational psychologists who know very little about language and even less about black children. The concept of verbal deprivation has no basis in social reality; in fact, black children in the urban ghettos receive a great deal of verbal stimulation,

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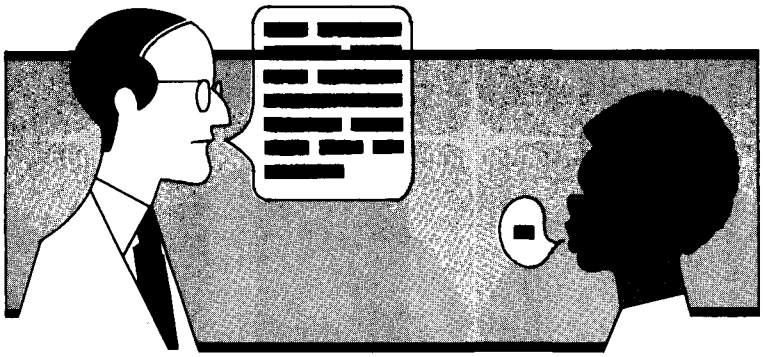

hear more well-formed sentences than middle-class children, and participate fully in a highly verbal culture; they have the same basic vocabulary, possess the same capacity for conceptual learning, and use the same logic as anyone else who learns to speak and understand English. The myth of verbal deprivation is particularly dangerous because it diverts the attention from real defects of our educational system to imaginary defects of the child; and as we shall see, it leads its sponsors inevitably to the hypothesis of the genetic inferiority of black children, which the verbal-deprivation theory was designed to avoid.

The deficit theory attempts to account for a number of facts that are known to all of us: that black children in the central urban ghettos do badly on all school subjects, including arithmetic and reading. In reading, they average more than two years behind the national norm. Furthermore, this lag is cumulative, so that they do worse comparatively in the fifth grade than in the first grade. The information available suggests that this bad performance is correlated most closely with socioeconomic status. Segregated ethnic groups, however, seem to do worse than others: in particular, Indian, Mexican-American, and black children.

We are obviously dealing with the effects of the caste system of American society—essentially a "color-marking" system. Everyone recognizes this. The question is, By what mechanism does the color bar prevent children from learning to read? One answer is the notion of "cultural deprivation" put forward by Martin Deutsch and others: the black children are said to lack the favorable factors in their home environment which enable middle-class children to do well in school. These factors involve the development, through verbal interaction with adults, of various cognitive skills, including the ability to reason abstractly, to speak fluently, and to focus upon long-range goals. In their publications, the psychologists Deutsch, Irwin Katz, and Arthur Jensen also recognize broader social factors. However, the deficit theory does not focus upon the interaction of the black child with white society so much as on his failure to interact with his mother at home. In the literature we find very little direct observation of verbal interaction in the black home; most typically, the investigators ask the child if he has dinner with his parents, and if he engages in dinner-table conversation with them. He is also asked whether his family takes him on trips to museums and other cultural activities. This slender thread of evidence is used to explain and interpret the large body of tests carried out in the laboratory and in the school.

The most extreme view which proceeds from this orientation—and one that is now being widely accepted—is that lower-class black children have no language at all. Some educational psychologists first draw from the writings of the British social psychologist Basil Bernstein the idea that "much of lower-class language consists of a kind of incidental 'emotional accompaniment' to action here and now." Bernstein's views are filtered through a strong bias against all forms of working-class behavior, so that he sees middle-class language as superior in every respect—as "more abstract, and necessarily somewhat more flexible, detailed and subtle." One can proceed through a range of such views until one comes to the practical program of Carl Bereiter, Siegfried Engelmann, and their associates. Bereiter's program for an academically oriented preschool is based upon the premise that black children must have a language which they can learn, and their empirical findings that these children come to school without such a language. In his work with four-year-old black children from Urbana, Illinois, Bereiter reports that their communication was by gestures, "single words," and "a series of badly connected words or phrases," such as *They mine* and *Me got juice.* He reports that black children could not ask questions, that "without exaggerating . . . these four-year-olds could make no statements of any kind." Furthermore, when these children were asked, "Where is the book?" they did not know enough to look at the table where the book was lying in order to answer. Thus Bereiter concludes that the children's speech forms are nothing more than a series of emotional cries, and he decides to treat them "as if the children had no language at all." He identifies their speech with his interpretation of Bernstein's restricted code: "The language of culturally deprived children . . . is not merely an underdeveloped version of standard English, but is a basically non-logical mode of expressive behavior." The basic program of his preschool is to teach them a new language devised by Engelmann, which consists of a limited series of questions and answers such as *Where is the squirrel? / The squirrel is in the tree.* The children will not be punished if they use their vernacular speech on the playground, but they will not be allowed to use it in the schoolroom. If they should answer the question "Where is the squirrel?" with the illogical vernacular form "In the tree," they will be reprehended by various means and made to say, "The squirrel is in the tree."

Linguists and psycholinguists who have worked with black children are likely to dismiss this view of their language as utter nonsense. Yet there is no reason to reject Bereiter's observations as spurious: they were certainly not made up. On the contrary, they give us a very clear view of the behavior of student and teacher which can be duplicated in any class-

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room. Our own research is done outside the schools, in situations where adults are not the dominant force, but on many occasions we have been asked to help analyze the results of research into verbal deprivation in such test situations.

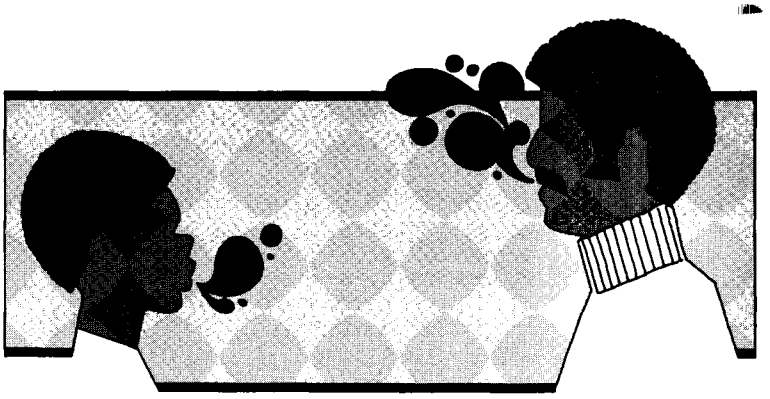
Here, for example, is a complete interview with a black boy, one of hundreds carried out in a New York City school. The boy enters a room where there is a large, friendly white interviewer, who puts on the table in front of him a block or a fire engine, and says, "Tell me everything you can about this!" (The interviewer's further remarks are in parentheses.)

[*12 seconds of silence*]
(What would you say it looks like?)
[*8 seconds of silence*]
A spaceship.
(Hmmmmm.)
[*13 seconds of silence*]
Like a je-et.
[*12 seconds of silence*]
Like a plane.
[*20 seconds of silence*]
(What color is it?)
Orange. [*2 seconds*] An' whi-ite. [*2 seconds*]
An' green.
[*6 seconds of silence*]
(An' what could you use it for?)
[*8 seconds of silence*]
A je-et.
[*6 seconds of silence*]
(If you had two of them, what would you do with them?)
[*6 seconds of silence*]
Give one to some-body.
(Hmmm. Who do you think would like to have it?)
[*10 seconds of silence*]
Cla-rence.
(Mm. Where do you think we could get another one of these?)
At the store.
(Oh-ka-ay!)

We have here the same kind of defensive, monosyllabic behavior which is reported in Bereiter's work. What is the situation that produces it? The child is in an asymmetrical situation where anything he says can, literally, be held against him. He has learned a number of devices to *avoid* saying anything in this situation, and he works very hard to achieve this end.

If one takes this interview as a measure of the verbal capacity of the child, it must be as his capacity to defend himself in a hostile and threatening situation. But unfortunately, thousands of such interviews are used as evidence of the child's total verbal capacity, or more simply his verbality: it is argued that this lack of "verbality" *explains* his poor performance in school.

The verbal behavior which is shown by the child in the test situation quoted above is not the result of in-



eptness of the interviewer. It is rather the result of regular sociolinguistic factors operating upon adult and child in this asymmetrical situation. In our work in urban ghetto areas, we have often encountered such behavior. For over a year Clarence Robins had worked with the Thunderbirds, a group of boys ten to twelve years old who were the dominant preadolescent group in a low-income project in Harlem. We then decided to interview a few younger brothers of the Thunderbirds, eight to nine years old. But our old approach didn't work. Here is an extract from the interview between Clarence and eight-year-old Leon L.:

CR: What if you saw somebody kickin' somebody else on the ground, or was using a stick, what would you do if you saw that?
LEON: Mmmm.
CR: If it was supposed to be a fair fight—
LEON: I don' know.
CR: You don' know? Would you do anything? . . . huh? I can't hear you.
LEON: No.
CR: Did you ever see somebody get beat up real bad?
LEON: . . . Nope ? ? ?
CR: Well—uh—did you ever get into a fight with a guy?
LEON: Nope.
CR: That was bigger than you?
LEON: Nope.
CR: You never been in a fight?
LEON: Nope.
CR: Nobody ever pick on you?
LEON: Nope.
CR: Nobody ever hit you?
LEON: Nope.
CR: How come?
LEON: Ah 'on' know.
CR: Didn't you ever hit somebody?
LEON: Nope.
CR: [*incredulous*] You never hit nobody?
LEON: Mhm.
CR: Aww, ba-a-a-be, you ain't gonna tell me that.

This nonverbal behavior occurs in a relatively *favorable* context for adult-child interaction, since the adult is a black man raised in Harlem, who knows this particular neighborhood and these boys very well. He is a skilled interviewer who has obtained a very high level of verbal response with techniques developed for a different age level, and has an ex-

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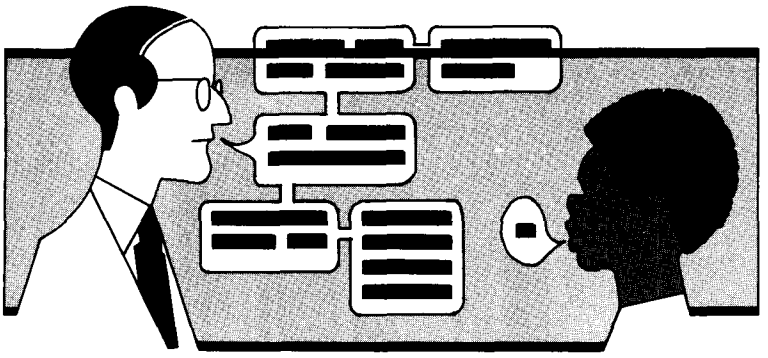

traordinary advantage over most teachers or experimenters in these respects. But even his skills and personality are ineffective in breaking down the social constraints that prevail here.

When we reviewed the record of this interview with Leon, we decided to use it as a test of our own knowledge of the sociolinguistic factors which control speech. We made the following changes in the social situation; in the next interview with Leon, Clarence:

1. Brought along a supply of potato chips, changing the "interview" into something more in the nature of a party.
2. Brought along Leon's best friend, eight-year-old Gregory.
3. Reduced the height imbalance. When Clarence got down on the floor of Leon's room, he dropped from 6 feet, 2 inches to 3 feet, 6 inches.
4. Introduced taboo words and taboo topics, and proved to Leon's surprise that one can say anything into our microphone without any fear of retaliation. It did not hit or bite back. The result of these changes is a striking difference in the volume and style of speech.

[*The tape is punctuated throughout by the sound of potato chips.*]

CR: Is there anybody who says, "Your momma drink pee"?
{LEON: [*rapidly and breathlessly*] Yee-ah!
{GREG: Yup.
LEON: And your father eat doo-doo for breakfas'!
CR: Ohhh! [*laughs*]
LEON: And they say your father—your father eat doo-doo for dinner!
GREG: When they sound on me, I say "C.B.M."
CR: What that mean?
{LEON: Congo booger-snatch! [*laughs*]
{GREG: Congo booger-snatcher! [*laughs*]
GREG: And sometimes I'll curse with "B.B."
CR: What that?
GREG: Oh, that's a "M.B.B." Black boy. [*Leon crunching on potato chips*]
GREG: 'Merican Black Boy.
CR: Oh.
GREG: Anyway, 'Mericans is same like white people, right?
LEON: And they talk about Allah.
CR: Oh, yeah?
GREG: Yeah.
CR: What they say about Allah?
{LEON: Allah—Allah is God.
{GREG: Allah—
CR: And what else?
LEON: I don' know the res'.
GREG: Allah i—Allah is God, Allah is the only God, Allah—
LEON: Allah is the *son* of God.
GREG: But can he make magic?
LEON: Nope.
GREG: I know who can make magic?
CR: Who can?
LEON: The God, the real one.
CR: Who can make magic?
GREG: The son of po'—(CR: Hm?) I'm sayin' the po'k chop God! He only a po'k chop God! [*Leon chuckles*]

The "nonverbal" Leon is now competing actively for the floor; Gregory and Leon talk to each other as much as they do to the interviewer. The monosyllabic speaker who had nothing to say about anything and could not remember what he did yesterday has disappeared. Instead, we have two boys who have so much to say that they keep interrupting each other, who seem to have no difficulty in using the English language to express themselves.

One can now transfer this demonstration of the sociolinguistic control of speech to other test situations, including IQ and reading tests in school. It should be immediately apparent that none of the standard tests will come anywhere near measuring Leon's verbal capacity. On these tests he will show up as very much the monosyllabic, inept, ignorant, bumbling child of our first interview. The teacher has far less ability than Clarence Robins to elicit speech from this child; Clarence knows the community, the things that Leon has been doing, and the things that Leon would like to talk about. But the power relationships in a one-to-one confrontation between adult and child are too asymmetrical. This does not mean that some black children will not talk a great deal when alone with an adult, or that an adult cannot get close to any child. It means that the social situation is the most powerful determinant of verbal behavior and that an adult must enter into the right social relation with a child if he wants to find out what a child can do. This is just what many teachers cannot do.

The view of the black speech community which we obtain from our work in the ghetto areas is precisely the opposite from that reported by Deutsch, Engelmann, and Bereiter. We see a child bathed in verbal stimulation from morning to night. We see many speech events which depend upon the competitive exhibitions of verbal skills: singing, sounding, toasts, rifting, louding—a whole range of activities in which the individual gains status through his use of language. We see the younger child trying to acquire these skills from older children—hanging around on the outskirts of the older peer groups, and imitating this behavior. We see, however, no con-

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nection between verbal skill at the speech events characteristic of the street culture and success in the schoolroom; which says something about classrooms rather than about a child's language.

There are undoubtedly many verbal skills which children from ghetto areas must learn in order to do well in school, and some of these are indeed characteristic of middle-class verbal behavior. Precision in spelling, practice in handling abstract symbols, the ability to state explicitly the meaning of words, and a richer knowledge of the Latinate vocabulary may all be useful acquisitions. But is it true that *all* of the middle-class verbal habits are functional and desirable in school? Before we impose middle-class verbal style upon children from other cultural groups, we should find out how much of it is useful for the main work of analyzing and generalizing, and how much is merely stylistic—or even dysfunctional. In high school and college, middle-class children spontaneously complicate their syntax to the point that instructors despair of getting them to make their language simpler and clearer.

Our work in the speech community makes it painfully obvious that in many ways working-class speakers are more effective narrators, reasoners, and debaters than many middle-class speakers, who temporize, qualify, and lose their argument in a mass of irrelevant detail. Many academic writers try to rid themselves of the part of middle-class style that is empty pretension, and keep the part necessary for precision. But the average middle-class speaker that we encounter makes no such effort; he is enmeshed in verbiage, the victim of sociolinguistic factors beyond his control.

I will not attempt to support this argument here with systematic quantitative evidence, although it is possible to develop measures which show how far middle-class speakers can wander from the point. I would like to contrast two speakers dealing with roughly the same topic: matters of belief. The first is Larry H., a fifteen-year-old core member of another group, the Jets. Larry is being interviewed here by John Lewis, our participant-observer among adolescents in South Central Harlem.

JL: What happens to you after you die? Do you know?

LARRY H: Yeah, I know. (What?) After they put you in the ground, your body turns into—ah—bones, an' *shit*.

JL: What happens to your spirit?

LARRY: Your spirit—soon as you die, your spirit leaves you. (And where does the spirit go?) Well, it all depends. (On what?) You know, like some people say if you're good an' shit, your spirit goin' t'heaven . . . 'n' if you bad, your spirit goin' to hell. Well, *bullshit!* Your spirit goin' to hell anyway, good or bad.

JL: Why?

LARRY: Why? I'll tell you why. 'Cause, you see, doesn' nobody really know that it's a God, y'know, 'cause, I mean I have seen black gods, pink gods, white gods, all color gods, and don't nobody know it's really a God. An' when they be sayin' if you good, you goin' t'heaven, tha's *bullshit*, 'cause you ain't goin' to no heaven, 'cause it ain't no heaven for you to go to.

Larry is a gifted speaker of the Black English vernacular (BEV) as opposed to standard English (SE). His grammar shows a high concentration of such characteristic BEV forms as negative inversion [*don't nobody know*], negative concord [*you ain't goin' to no heaven*], *invariant be* [when they be sayin'], dummy *it* for SE *there* [*it ain't no heaven*], optional copula deletion [*if you're good . . . if you bad*], and full forms of auxiliaries [*I have seen*]. The only SE influence in this passage is the one case of *doesn't* instead of the invariant *don't* of BEV. Larry also provides a paradigmatic example of the rhetorical style of BEV: he can sum up a complex argument in a few words, and the full force of his opinions comes through without qualification or reservation. He is eminently quotable, and his interviews give us a great many concise statements of the BEV point of view. One can almost say that Larry speaks the BEV culture.

It is the logical form of this passage which is of particular interest here. Larry presents a complex set of interdependent propositions which can be explicated by setting out the SE equivalents in linear order. The basic argument is to deny the twin propositions:

(A) If you are good, (B) then your spirit will go to heaven.

(not A) If you are bad, (C) then your spirit will go to hell.

Larry denies (B), and allows that if (A) or (not A) is true, (C) will follow. His argument may be outlined:

(1) Everyone has a different idea of what God is like.
(2) Therefore nobody really knows that God exists.
(3) If there is a heaven, it was made by God.
(4) If God doesn't exist, he couldn't have made heaven.
(5) Therefore heaven does not exist.
(6) You can't go somewhere that doesn't exist.

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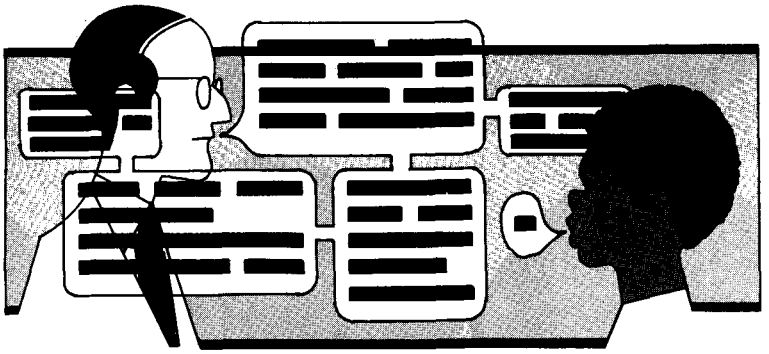

(not B) Therefore you can't go to heaven.
(C) Therefore you are going to hell.

This hypothetical argument is not carried on at a high level of seriousness. It is a game played with ideas as counters, in which opponents use a wide variety of verbal devices to win. There is no personal commitment to any of these propositions, and no reluctance to strengthen one's argument by bending the rules of logic as in the (2, 4) sequence. But if the opponent invokes the rules of logic, they hold. In John Lewis' interviews, he often makes this move, and the force of his argument is always acknowledged and countered within the rules of logic.

JL: Well, if there's no heaven, how could there be a hell?

LARRY: I mean—ye-eah. Well, let me tell you, it ain't no hell, 'cause this is hell right here, y'know! (This is hell?) Yeah, this is hell right here!

Larry's answer is quick, ingenious, and decisive. The application of the (3-4-5) argument to hell is denied, since hell is here, and therefore conclusion (not B) stands. These are not ready-made or preconceived opinions, but new propositions devised to win the logical argument in the game being played. The reader will note the speed and precision of Larry's mental operations. He does not wander, or insert meaningless verbiage. It is often said that the nonstandard vernacular is not suited for dealing with abstract or hypothetical questions, but in fact, speakers of the BE vernacular take great delight in exercising their wit and logic on the most improbable and problematical matters. Despite the fact that Larry H. does not believe in God, and has just denied all knowledge of him, John Lewis advances the following hypothetical question:

JL: . . . But, just say that there is a God, what color is he? White or black?

LARRY: Well, if it is a God . . . I wouldn' know what color, I couldn' say—couldn' nobody say what—

JL: But now, jus' suppose there was a God—

LARRY: Unless'n they say . . .

JL: No, I was jus' sayin' jus' suppose there is a God, would he be white or black?

LARRY: . . . He'd be white, man.

JL: Why?

LARRY: Why? I'll tell you why. 'Cause the average whitey out here got everything, you dig? And the nigger ain't got *shit,* y'know? Y'unnerstan'? So—um—for—in order for *that* to happen, you know it ain't no black God that's doin' that *bullshit.*

No one can hear Larry's answer to this question without being convinced of being in the presence of a skilled speaker with great "verbal presence of mind," who can use the English language expertly for many purposes.

Let us now turn to the second speaker, an upper-middle-class, college-educated black man being interviewed by Clarence Robins in our survey of adults in South Central Harlem.

CR: Do you know of anything that someone can do, to have someone who has passed on visit him in a dream?

CHAS. M.: Well, I even heard my parents say that there is such a thing as something in dreams, some things like that, and sometimes dreams do come true. I have personally never had a dream come true. I've never dreamt that somebody was dying and they actually died (Mhm), or that I was going to have ten dollars the next day and somehow I got ten dollars in my pocket. (Mhm.) I don't particularly believe in that, I don't think it's true. I do feel, though, that there is such a thing as—ah—witchcraft. I do feel that in certain cultures there is such a thing as witchcraft, or some sort of *science* of witchcraft; I don't think that it's just a matter of believing hard enough that there is such a thing as witchcraft. I do believe that there is such a thing that a person can put himself in a state of *mind* (Mhm), or that—er—something could be given them to intoxicate them in a certain—to a certain frame of mind—that—that could actually be considered witchcraft.

Charles M. is obviously a "good speaker" who strikes the listener as well-educated, intelligent, and sincere. He is a likable and attractive person—the kind of person that middle-class listeners rate very high on a scale of "job suitability" and equally high as a potential friend. His language is more moderate and tempered than Larry's; he makes every effort to qualify his opinions, and seems anxious to avoid any misstatements or overstatements. From these qualities emerges the primary characteristic of this passage—its *verbosity.* Words multiply, some modifying and qualifying, others repeating or padding the main argument. The first half of this extract is a response to the initial question on dreams, basically:

(1) Some people say that dreams sometimes come true.

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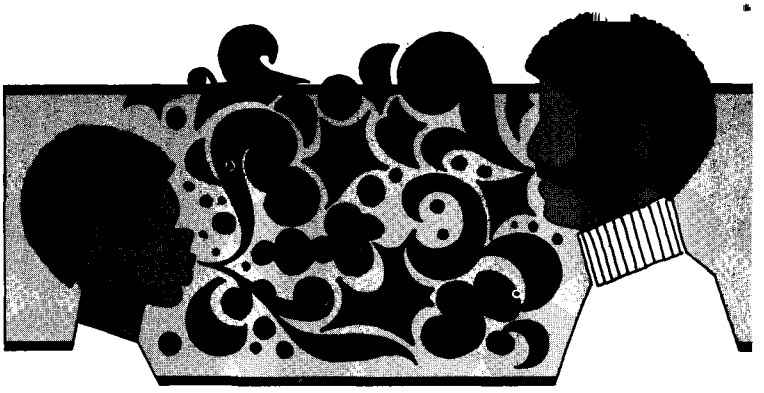

(2) I have never had a dream come true.
(3) Therefore I don't believe (1).

This much of Charles M.'s response is well directed to the point of the question. He then volunteers a statement of his beliefs about witchcraft which shows the difficulty of middle-class speakers who (a) want to express a belief in something but (b) want to show themselves as judicious, rational, and free from superstitions. The basic proposition can be stated simply in five words:

But I believe in witchcraft.

However, the idea is enlarged to exactly one hundred words, and it is difficult to see what else is being said. The vacuity of this passage becomes more evident if we remove repetitions, fashionable words, and stylistic decorations:

But I believe in witchcraft.
I don't think witchcraft is just a belief.
A person can put himself or be put in a state of mind that is witchcraft.

Without the extra verbiage and the OK words like *science, culture* and *intoxicate,* Charles M. appears as something less than a first-rate thinker. The initial impression of him as a good speaker is simply our long-conditioned reaction to middle-class verbosity: we know that people who use these stylistic devices are educated people, and we are inclined to credit them with saying something intelligent.

Let us now examine Bereiter's own data on the verbal behavior of the black children he dealt with. The expressions *They mine* and *Me got juice* are cited as examples of a language which lacks the means for expressing logical relations—in this case characterized as "a series of badly connected words." In the case of *They mine,* it is apparent that Bereiter confuses the notions of logic and explicitness. We know that there are many languages of the world which do not have a present copula, and which conjoin subject and predicate complement without a verb. Russian, Hungarian, and Arabic may be foreign, but they are not by the same token illogical. In the case of black English we are not dealing with even this superficial grammatical difference, but rather with a low-level rule which carries contraction one step further to delete single consonants representing the verbs *is, have,* or *will.* We have yet to find any children who do not sometimes use the full forms of *is* or *will,* even though they may frequently delete it.

The deletion of the *is* or *are* in black English is not the result of erratic or illogical behavior: it follows the same regular rules as standard English contraction. Wherever standard English can contract, black children use either the contracted form or (more commonly) the deleted zero form. Thus *They mine* corresponds to standard English *They're mine,* not to the full form *They are mine.* On the other hand, no such deletion is possible in positions where standard English cannot contract: just as one cannot say *That's what they're* in standard English, *That's what they* is equally impossible in the vernacular we are considering. The appropriate use of the deletion rule, like the contraction rule, requires a deep and intimate knowledge of English grammar and phonology. Such knowledge is not available for conscious inspection by native speakers: the rules we have worked out for standard contraction have never appeared in any grammar, and are certainly not a part of the conscious knowledge of any standard English speakers. Nevertheless, the adult or child who uses these rules must have formed at some level of psychological organization clear concepts of "tense marker," "verb phrase," "rule ordering," "sentence embedding," "pronoun," and many other grammatical categories which are essential parts of any logical system.

Bereiter's reaction to the sentence *Me got juice* is even more puzzling. If Bereiter believes that *Me got juice* is not a logical expression, it can only be that he interprets the use of the objective pronoun *me* as representing a difference in logical relationship to the verb; that the child is in fact saying that "the juice got him" rather than "he got the juice"! If on the other hand the child means "I got juice," then this sentence form shows only that he has not learned the formal rules for the use of the subjective form *I* and oblique form *me.*

Bereiter shows even more profound ignorance of the rules of discourse and of syntax when he rejects "In the tree" as an illogical or badly formed answer to "Where is the squirrel?" Such elliptical answers are of course used by everyone, and they show the appropriate deletion of subject and main verb, leaving the locative which is questioned by *wh + there.* The reply *In the tree* demonstrates that the listener has been attentive to and apprehended the syntax of the speaker. Whatever formal structure we wish to write for expressions such as *Yes* or *Home* or *In the tree,* it is obvious that they cannot be interpreted without knowing the structure of the question which preceded them, and that they presuppose an understanding of the syntax of the question. Thus if you ask me, "Where is the squirrel?" it is necessary for me to understand the sentence from an underlying form which would otherwise have produced *The squirrel is there.* If the child had answered *The tree,* or *Squirrel the tree,* or *The in tree,* we would then assume that he did not understand the syntax of the

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full form, *The squirrel is in the tree.* Given the data that Bereiter presents, we cannot conclude that the child has no grammar, but only that the investigator does not understand the rules of grammar. It does not necessarily do any harm to use the full form *The squirrel is in the tree,* if one wants to make fully explicit the rules of grammar which the child has internalized. Much of logical analysis consists of making explicit just that kind of internalized rule. But it is hard to believe that any good can come from a program which begins with so many misconceptions about the input data. Bereiter and Engelmann believe that in teaching the child to say *The squirrel is in the tree* or *This is a box* and *This is not a box,* they are teaching him an entirely new language, whereas in fact they are only teaching him to produce slightly different forms of the language he already has.

If there is a failure of logic involved here, it is surely in the approach of the verbal-deprivation theorists, rather than in the mental abilities of the children concerned. We can isolate six distinct steps in the reasoning which has led to programs such as those of Deutsch, Bereiter, and Engelmann:

1. The lower-class child's verbal response to a formal and threatening situation is used to demonstrate his lack of verbal capacity, or verbal deficit.
2. This verbal deficit is declared to be a major cause of the lower-class child's poor performance in school.
3. Since middle-class children do better in school, middle-class speech habits are said to be necessary for learning.
4. Class and ethnic differences in grammatical form are equated with differences in the capacity for logical analysis.
5. Teaching the child to mimic certain formal speech patterns used by middle-class teachers is seen as teaching him to think logically.
6. Children who learn these formal speech patterns are then said to be thinking logically, and it is predicated that they will do much better in reading and arithmetic in the years to follow.

This article has proved that numbers 1. and 2. at least are wrong. However, it is not too naïve to ask, What is wrong with being wrong? We have already conceded that black children need help in analyzing language into its surface components, and in being more explicit. But there are, in fact, serious and damaging consequences of the verbal-deprivation theory. These may be considered under two headings: (a) the theoretical bias and (b) the consequences of failure.

It is widely recognized that the teacher's attitude toward the child is an important factor in the latter's success or failure. The work of Robert Rosenthal on "self-fulfilling prophecies" shows that the progress of children in the early grades can be dramatically affected by a single random labeling of certain children as "intellectual bloomers." When the everyday language of black children is stigmatized as "not a language at all" and "not possessing the means for logical thought," the effect of such a labeling is repeated many times during each day of the school year. Every time that a child uses a form of BEV without the copula or with negative concord, he will be labeling himself for the teacher's benefit as "illogical," as a "nonconceptual thinker." This notion gives teachers a ready-made, theoretical basis for the prejudice they may already feel against the lower-class black child and his language. When they hear him say *I don't want none* or *They mine,* they will be hearing, through the bias provided by the verbal-deprivation theory, not an English dialect different from theirs, but the primitive mentality of the savage mind.

But what if the teacher succeeds in training the child to use the new language consistently? The verbal deprivation theory holds that this will lead to a whole chain of successes in school, and that the child will be drawn away from the vernacular culture into the middle-class world. Undoubtedly this will happen with a few isolated individuals, just as it happens in every school system today for a few children. But we are concerned not with the few but the many, and for the majority of black children the distance between them and the school is bound to widen under this approach.

The essential fallacy of the verbal-deprivation theory lies in tracing the educational failure of the child to his personal deficiencies. At present, these deficiencies are said to be caused by his home environment. It is traditional to explain a child's failure in school by his inadequacy; but when failure reaches such massive proportions, it seems necessary to look at the social and cultural obstacles to learning and the inability of the school to adjust to the social situation.

The second area in which the verbal-deprivation theory is doing serious harm to our educational system is in the consequences of this failure and the reaction to it. As Operation Head Start fails, the interpretations which we receive will be from the same educational psychologists who designed this program. The fault will be found, not in the data, the theory, or the methods used, but rather in the children who have failed to respond to the opportunities offered them. When black children fail to show the significant advance which the deprivation theory predicts, it will be further proof of the profound gulf which separates their mental processes from those of civilized, middle-class mankind.

A sense of the failure of Operation Head Start is already commonplace. Some prominent figures in the program have reacted to this situation by saying that intervention did not take place early enough. Bettye M. Caldwell notes that

> the research literature of the last decade dealing with social-class differences has made abundantly clear that all parents are not qualified to provide even the basic essentials of physical and psychological care to their children.

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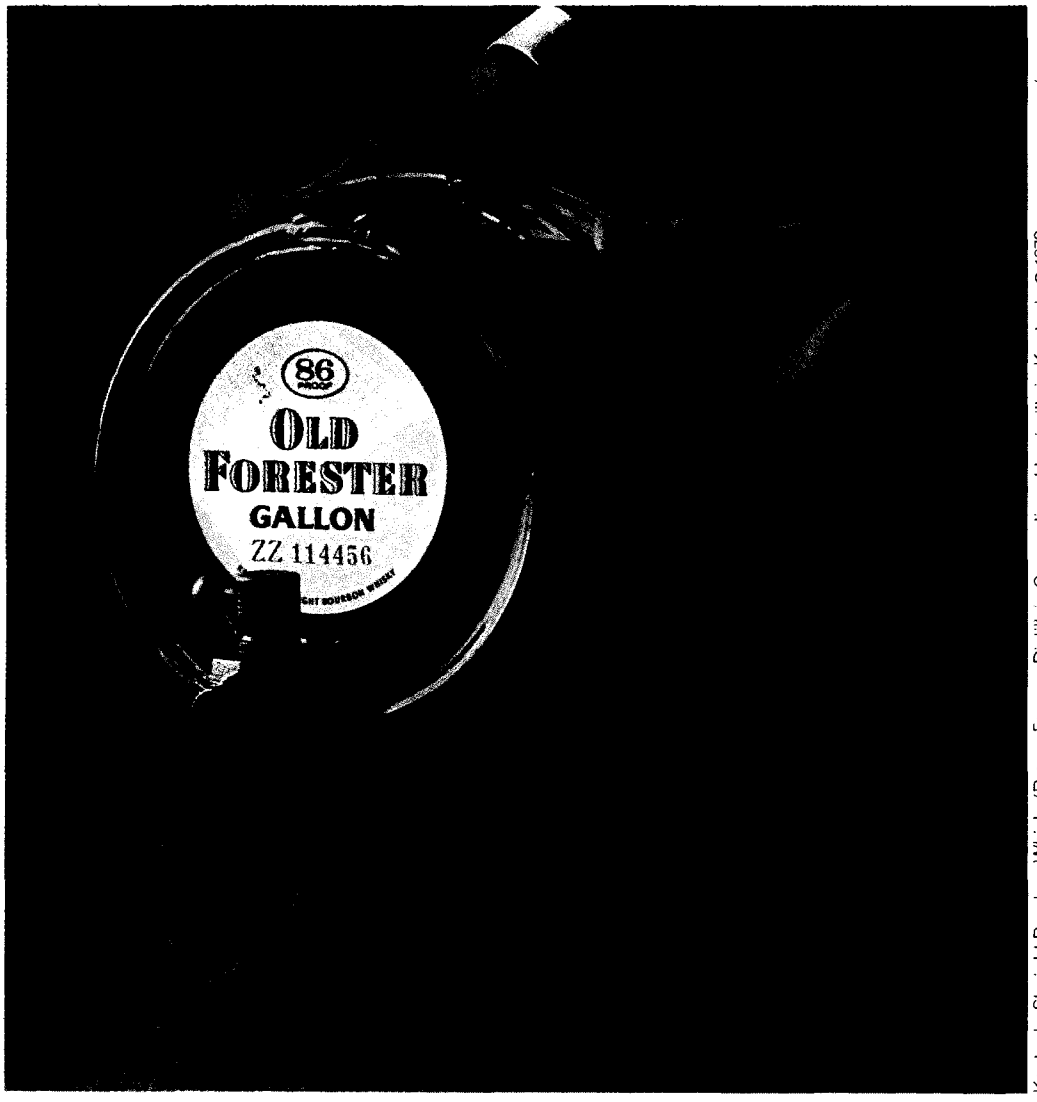

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The deficit theory now begins to focus on the "long-standing patterns of parental deficit" which fill the literature. "There is, perhaps unfortunately," writes Caldwell, "no literacy test for motherhood." Failing such eugenic measures, she has proposed "educationally oriented day care for culturally deprived children between six months and three years of age." The children are returned home each evening to "maintain primary emotional relationships with their own families," but during the day they are removed "hopefully to prevent the deceleration in rate of development which seems to occur in many deprived children around the age of two to three years."

There are others who feel that even the best of the intervention programs, such as those of Bereiter and Engelmann, will not help the black child no matter when they are applied—that we are faced once again with the "inevitable hypothesis" of the genetic inferiority of the black people. Arthur Jensen, for example, in his *Harvard Educational Review* paper (1969), argues that the verbal-deprivation theorists with whom he has been associated—Deutsch, Whiteman, Katz, Bereiter—have been given every opportunity to prove their case and have failed. This opinion forms part of the argument leading to his overall conclusion that the "preponderance of the evidence is . . . less consistent with a strictly environmental hypothesis than with the genetic hypothesis."

Jensen argues that the middle-class white population is differentiated from the working-class white and black population in the ability for "cognitive or conceptual learning," which Jensen calls Level II intelligence as against mere "associative learning," or Level I intelligence.

Thus Jensen found that one group of middle-class children were helped by their concept-forming ability to recall twenty familiar objects that could be classified into four categories: animals, furniture, clothing, or foods. Lower-class black children did just as well as middle-class children with a miscellaneous set, but showed no improvement with objects that could be so organized.

In the earliest stages of language learning, children acquire "selectional restrictions" in their use of words. For example, they learn that some verbs take ANIMATE subjects, but others only INANIMATE ones: thus we say *The machine breaks* but not *John breaks; The paper tears* but not *George tears.* A speaker of English must master such subtle categories as the things which *break,* like *boards, glasses,* and *ropes;* things which *tear,* like *shirts, paper,* and *skin;* things which *snap,* like *buttons, potato chips,* and *plastic,* and other categories which *smash, crumple,* or *go bust.*

In studies of Samoan children, Keith Kernan has shown that similar rules are learned reliably long before the grammatical particles that mark tense, number, and so on. The experimentation on free recall that Jensen reports ignores such abilities, and defines intelligence as a particular way of answering a particular kind of question within a narrow cultural framework. Recent work of anthropologists in other cultures is beginning to make some headway in discovering how our tests bias the results so as to make normally intelligent people look stupid. Michael Cole and his associates gave the same kind of free recall tests to Kpelle speakers in Liberia. Those who had not been to school—children or adults—could only remember eight or ten out of the twenty and showed no "clustering" according to categories, no matter how long the trials went on. Yet one simple change in the test method produced a surprising change. The interviewer took each of the objects to be remembered and held it over a chair: one chair for each category, or just one chair for all categories. Suddenly the Kpelle subjects showed a dramatic improvement, remembered seventeen to eighteen objects, and matched American subjects in both recall and the amount of clustering by categories. We do not understand this effect, for we are only beginning to discover the subtle biases built in our test methods which prevent people from using the abilities that they display in their language and in everyday life.

Linguists are in an excellent position to demonstrate the fallacies of the verbal-deprivation theory. All linguists agree that nonstandard dialects are highly structured systems; they do not see these dialects as accumulations of errors caused by the failure of their speakers to master standard English. When linguists hear black children saying *He crazy* or *Her my friend* they do not hear a "primitive language." Nor do they believe that the speech of working-class people is merely a form of emotional expression, incapable of relating logical thought. Linguists therefore condemn with a single voice Bereiter's view that the vernacular can be disregarded.

There is no reason to believe that any nonstandard vernacular is in itself an obstacle to learning. The chief problem is ignorance of language on the part of all concerned. Our job as linguists is to remedy this ignorance: Bereiter and Engelmann want to reinforce it and justify it. Teachers are now being told to ignore the language of black children as unworthy of attention and useless for learning. They are being taught to hear every natural utterance of the child as evidence of his mental inferiority. As linguists we are unanimous in condemning this view as bad observation, bad theory, and bad practice.

That educational psychology should be strongly influenced by a theory so false to the facts of language is unfortunate; but that children should be the victims of this ignorance is intolerable. If linguists can contribute some of their valuable knowledge and energy toward exposing the fallacies of the verbal-deprivation theory, we will have done a great deal to justify the support that society has given to basic research in our field. □

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THE DEBT

A story by Jesse Hill Ford

He came to me and said I had better watch out, that there was no way to know who might be looking in my window. And he said: "You better be careful who you go around talking to because you never know who you might be talking to and which side they are on." And I could see he had a pistol in his back pocket. A little automatic. That's where they carry them, in the same pocket with their handkerchief, and when they turn around and walk you can see the sag and sometimes even the outline of the gun. He was one of those.

Lord, what a day it was. It was September and the air was fresh and there was a cool taste in it and the sky was clear and the sun was beautiful on the fields. The trees hadn't started to turn yet and their leaves trembled and all the bugs and insects seemed to be singing everywhere you went. It was a pleasure just to be outdoors. I had gone to look over a couple of houses my boys had framed up and to talk to my carpenters, and I was just headed back to my truck when he drove up and we had that talk there beside the road.

He said some people think they are better than other people and that they can run it over them any which away. He was driving a twenty-year-old Dodge. It was a funny color green and he had built him a place in the back for his tools. He was one of those combination electrician-plumbers that learn fast. Maybe he was in the Navy, I'm not sure; anyhow, he could fix things—anything from automobiles to air conditioners to TV sets—and he was good at it, but he had trouble getting along with people and everytime he got a steady job they fired him.

Maybe he had pulled a few little jobs. You could tell nearly everything in the back of that car came from a midnight tool sale somewhere. He had been away to one of those technical reform schools as a kid, and then the Navy got stuck with him. After that he did some time—not much, for some little job. Now he walked to his car and I could see how his pocket sagged in the back. He put his hand on the door handle to open it, then took his hand away and came back to where I was standing beside my truck. I think he must have practiced it. Anyhow, here he comes. He hadn't much more than medium size, but it was plain he felt a lot bigger than he was, and his arms had that ropy look, which means you better be careful. He had lit a cigarette and it was trembling in his lips, and his hair—the black, oily kind that they all wear too long—had fallen a little on his forehead. He tossed his head and pushed back his hair and took the cigarette into his hand and shaded it close, protecting it.

"I b'lieve I'll let you give me a receipt for that forty-eight dollars," he says.

"The only trouble about that is you haven't paid me the money. Hand me the money, and I'll hand you a receipt," I said.

"Maybe you didn't hear me," he says. "Put that receipt in my hand. I just want to be quit of the worry, that's all. I'm tired of people callin' my wife at home and tellin' her we better pay that money. My wife's been sick and

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she's real nervous. I don't like people meddlin' with my wife. I'll take that receipt."

"Why don't you just ask for my wallet," I says. "Then you could pay me and have a few hundred left over to pay everybody else you owe and maybe something extra for a bottle of beer and a postcard."

"That's callin' me a highway robber," he says.

"You figure it out for yourself. But you got forty-eight dollars' worth of locks from me and installed them and collected your money and you haven't paid me a dollar and that was going on nine months ago. Now, maybe some people will let you get away with it. I won't. You owe it and I won't lay off until you pay it."

"OK, then. If that's how you want it."

"That's just how it is," I says.

He went back to his car and put his hand out to open it and let it rest on the handle awhile like he was thinking of something. Then he opened the door and got in and whirled off up into the dirt where we had graded the place for the driveway of one of the houses, and then he whumped back out into the road and blatted off, those straight pipes and whatever kind of high-powered engine he had installed in that thing hauling to beat sixty. He left a long skid mark on the asphalt pavement. It was unsightly and out of place there where people would be coming to look at a house to decide if they wanted it for their home.

It was still thirty minutes before lunchtime so I drove by the store and went to my office and talked to a couple of fellows that wanted loans. I let them have what they needed and got their notes signed and then went outside where they were unloading a shipment of concrete steps out back between where we store our feed and our salt and our poisons and pre-emergers. There were two-steps and three-steps and four-steps. One of the boys had bush-hogged a pretty-good-size place back there for them, and they looked nice—ready-made steps. I walked up and down one of each kind and just could not help thinking again what a fine day it was.

Then I drove on out home to lunch and looked at the cotton and the soybeans and the cattle like I always do. Everything was beautiful, and the early corn was drying out good. The cornfields were the color of a faded army shirt.

She had my dinner ready. When I married her I was a grocery clerk but she knew I didn't have any bad habits. Beef roast and potatoes and greens and string beans. I don't eat bread anymore since the doctor took me off bread. I had two glasses of iced tea and watched the commodity reports on the television.

When I got up to leave she mentioned a phone call. "They said some ugly words."

"Man or woman?" I says. She looked nice. She always wears a nice dress with a pretty pattern about it and she keeps herself nice, and has kept herself that way all the thirty years of our marriage. She keeps the house and I manage the store and the farms and all the business. That's how we have it divided up and it works pretty well.

"Man," she says.

"I think I know who it is. If they call again just hang up before they get a chance to say anything. I'll take care of it. But call me down at the store if you get any more calls."

"Is it trouble, Bud?"

"Not big trouble," I says.

"Well." I kissed her on the cheek and went back to the store and hadn't sat down to my desk good when she called. I told her to take the phone off the hook.

There didn't seem anything for it but to give him his satisfaction one way or another. I thought of going after him myself and I thought of calling the county seat and talking to the sheriff. I went over in my head the names of the boys I know on the highway patrol. I didn't want to let myself lose my temper because a businessman hasn't any call ever to lose his temper. Anger is the little man's luxury and the big man's poison. So I went on about other things and kept turning it over in my head, making myself get it in the proper light.

There he was, thinking I don't know what, and having the indecency about him to make ugly-word phone calls to my house because he owed me money and didn't want to pay it. Upsetting my wife there minding her own business in her own home because he owed me forty-eight dollars.

That afternoon I phoned the collection agency over in Somerton and asked them what about it, what progress had they made with him, and they said, well, they had had a lot of trouble with him, that his credit was just about as lousy as a man's credit could get, that he owed the doctors and the dentists and that his furniture was always being repossessed. If they couldn't get it out of him any other way, of course they had their lawyer, and would call him into court and get a judgment against him, but that was an expense they tried to avoid.

I asked what about him, that didn't he have a pretty good bit of work what with one thing and another, and they said, yes, he did, but that what money he got didn't go against his debts or to pay his rent.

"I tell you what," I says. "Just turn that forty-eight dollars back over to me. I'll either get it from him myself or I'll forget it. But don't call him anymore on my behalf."

"That's fine with us," she says. "The way he is it's better to leave him alone, because it's no telling what he may do or who he might be in with."

When I hung up I wasn't any farther down the pike than I was when I called.

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She hadn't told me a thing about him I didn't already know. In another instance I suppose I would have just written him off as a bad debt, but what he said to me earlier had started to stick in my craw. That afternoon when I went out to look at the houses, there that streak was on the asphalt.

I drove back to the store and told Ben I wanted to see him and to fetch Ed for me and come on in the back room where we all could talk. Ben took off his apron and nodded to some of the others to look out for the cash register, and he went out to look for Ed. I went on into the back room. It's set up there for privacy. If I have to fuss at somebody or fire an employee, that's what it's for, and it's a pretty bleak place but it's quiet and nobody comes back there by mistake.

I looked out the little window. It's got bars there on the outside to make it hard for somebody to break in, and looking out I could see the ready-made concrete steps, white as sheets in the sunshine outside there in that yard we had made for them.

Ed and Ben came in and Ben shut the door and we sat down. The table belonged to my grandmother and was on the porch of her house and I saved it and put it back there. It's round and it's a nice old table, real old-timey and countrified, but hell you can't get much farther back in the country, so I'm not ashamed of the table and in some ways I'm proud of it. I feel better when I'm sitting there because a lot of problems in my family have been solved with that table present, and when my daddy moved to West Tennessee with a wagon, my grandmother and my mama rode in the wagon with that table. Dad and I walked.

Ed and Ben are both cousins, so I could speak as I pleased. I told them everything.

Ben kept looking at his thumbs. He wears glasses and it gives him a studious look. Ed works mostly outdoors and he's weather-tanned and his eyes are good. He's a good farm manager and knows tractors and equipment of all kinds. He's got all his strength, whereas Ben is a lot smaller and older. Someway—through hard work I guess—I ended up being the owner of things with most of my relatives working for me. I try to be fair and go to church Sundays just as regular as the next fellow—more regular I guess, than most.

"Well, what do you think, Ben?"

Ben kept moving and studying his thumbs. He got his pocketknife out and opened it and started scraping at one of his thumbnails.

"It's like this. You got a store, fruit sheds, potato houses, the cannery, the tractor and equipment company, them two cotton gins—and how many barns I don't know."

"And the lumber shed, don't forget," says Ed.

"The lumber shed," Ben continues, "and how many houses under construction and what all else. And him, he's got that automobile, and a houseful of young'uns he don't give a damn about and whatever else he could steal, beg, and borrow."

"And his old lady he don't care nothing about," says Ed.

"And his old lady," says Ben, and he laid down his knife. "And he's got his gun in one pocket and his matches in the other. So I'd have to say we got one hell of a problem, because it ain't any way in the world of tellin' what he might do."

"Then I'll find him and go give him his receipt and forget him." I said it mainly to test the both of them. They knew me well enough to know what I was doing, but they both thought about it. Ed finally looked up at me right level and shook his head *no.*

"Why not?"

"Because then we'd never see the last of him for coming in wanting to charge something. He'd have in his bluff and it would only get worse and worse."

"It is gonna get worse and worse," says Ben. "Everybody in four counties has had the same experience with him. And say he does something like burn the lumber shed and you catch him and you can prove it and you get him sent up—don't you think he won't be right back here burning something else before you can say eleven-twenty-nine?"

"Bud, it's this way. We couldn't afford to hire police enough to protect us against just one like him," says Ed. "I hate ever to speak in this way, but there is just one way to take care of this and it is to get rid of him. Otherwise you'll have one of them slugs in your belly or your back and we'll be totin' your box to a hole over yonder in the cemetery and he'll draw down maybe two, maybe five years, and be back after me or Ben or whatnot."

Something came on my heart and sat there like a weight.

"Oh, I know it's hard," says Ben. "But we live in a hard neck of the woods and we all come up the hard way. We don't have the protection out here like they have other places."

"All right," I says, and the weight only got heavier. And I thought, God, please forgive me. But it does look like it's me or him, Lord. It does look that way. Amen. "How?" I says.

So we went over it together, all the different ways. Used to be they'd take bad niggers and just knock 'em in the head and pour some cheap liquor into 'em and leave 'em on the railroad and let the train run over their body. But that got to looking too obvious, whereas it has to be said that a man got so drunk he laid down and went to sleep in the middle of the railroad track. That was ruled out by a unanimous vote.

"Besides," says Ben. "He's a white man. It would be looked into."

Ben told of a fellow he knew of who could arrange bad automobile wrecks. My heart got heavier and colder by the minute. For a while I could hardly think and Ben went into the office and got a pint of whiskey. I took a drink and Ed brought some Cokes from the store.

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"I know how hard it is," Ed says. "I feel the same way. But think about what we have to protect. Think about the duty we have to look after ourselves and our people and our things. Bear that in mind."

"Well," I says at last. "It will have to be suicide."

They both agreed. I could tell they both knew it was going to be a heavy piece of business. "I wonder if he has any insurance?" I says.

Ben went to find out. He went into my office and phoned and told the guy's wife he was taking a survey for the government and wanted to know about the head of the household, if he had any life insurance. Tell somebody you're the bank or the government and they will tell you anything you want to know.

"He has his GI and one other policy he pays for by the week," says Ben, and sat back down and took a swig of his Coke.

"At least that's one thing he pays for," I says. "I'm glad to know there's something he don't welsh on."

"She had the receipts," says Ben.

It made me feel some better, but not much. We closed the door again and I went to the window and stood looking out at the ready-made steps. One had been sold, apparently. Some of the boys were lifting and loading it on a truck. I had figured they were an item that would sell when I took them on, and there was one already being loaded. It was a three-step. Nice enough for any kind of home, I thought. "*When* is the next question," I says, still looking out where they were loading the steps.

"I figger it's like the doctor just told you you got to have an operation. The sooner the better. That way it don't have so much time to hang over you and worry you to death," says Ed.

"OK. How?" I says.

"He's a repairman, ain't he?" says Ben. "So what if he gets a call to come out in the country. Somebody's washing machine is broke down—"

"Make it a deep freezer," I says. "And say the TV needs something, and you got some plumbing you want him to do—but the deep freezer will make it urgent."

"That's right," Ed says. "A man will pay good money quick to keep from losing his meat. Say it's your freezer."

"All right, then *where?*"

"Collinses moved out of their house today," says Ed. "Halfway between here and Graball."

He was right. I had bought the farm last month and the man had just moved out, and it was the right kind of place, on a quiet, lonely stretch of gravel, with the house set far back, a peaceful place with plenty of shade trees.

"Start calling him," I says.

It took one call to his house to find out where he was. The second call Ben got him on the wire. He was at a grocery in Somerton working on a freezer counter there. We have them in the store, and if you don't empty them every week regular as clockwork and clean them out, the ice will cake up and flies and bugs and trash will pile up until the thing just can't keep anything frozen. We keep ours cleaned and they work fine, but ignorant grocers are always having theirs break down. They would sure miss their repairman, I thought.

I heard Ben giving him the directions. Then he hung up and turned and looked at me and Ed. "He will be there in about an hour."

We took Ed's pickup because he's got a shotgun racked up just behind the seat against the rear window. I never carry a gun around and don't care anything about hunting. I never had the time when I was a kid and now when I could take the time if I wanted to, I'd rather not. I feel better working. It's all I care about—my business—I mean other than my wife and my two kids in college. My business is everything to me, and I've been with it since I was eleven years old.

We talked about it some on the way out there. I said I'd do it, but Ben wouldn't hear of it. "You're too big a man," he said. "It's us as much as yourself we're protectin' and we owe you this much at least, for everything you've done and how nice and kind you always been to us."

"Ain't your kind of job, Bud," says Ed.

"Still, I'm responsible," I says.

The crops all out that way were beautiful. We pulled up in the drive at the Collins place and I asked Ed what he thought we should ask for the house and five acres of ground. When we buy a farm we are mainly interested in the acreage, and we sell off the house and a little piece of ground. It amazes you how many people working in town want a little place in the country to live.

Ed said he supposed we could ask twenty thousand dollars and have back half what we paid for the whole farm if we got seventeen-five. I said I supposed so. "Those big old shade trees ought to make it sell in a minute," I says.

Ben took off his glasses and cleaned them right good. He had got him a fresh apron and put it on before we left the store. We sat in the truck awhile until it was time to go in the house.

"Park it around back out of sight?" says Ben, as Ed got out and took the shotgun off the rack.

"No," I says. "The truck makes it look more natural. Leave it where it sits."

Ed had the key and we went inside the house, a fine old farmhouse, well kept, but forlorn the way anything looks when the people have moved out of it. They had left it clean, though. They had left the hardwood floors waxed bright as a button and the windows were clean and there was not a speck of trash, not so much as an old newspaper left behind—nothing unsightly here. You take another class of people, and more than likely the kind that would buy the place and move out here from town; did they

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ever sell it, they'd leave it a mess and a wreck. There is all the difference in people, and I have seen all types, I guess.

"Here he comes," says Ed. He was at one of the front windows with the gun. I heard him click it off safety and I thought: Lord, don't let him have to shoot him with that thing. Then I got about halfway through the Lord's Prayer—just thinking it in my head, mind you, not out loud. I hadn't a thing to worry about.

There was a knock on the door. Ben answered it, apron and all, which I thought at the time looked kind of foolish, and in he stepped, carrying his toolbox. His shirt was dirty about the shoulders like he had crawled under something. He looked kind of strange when he saw Ed. He just stood there and looked at Ed and Ben closed the door.

"Hold still now," says Ben, and slipped the gun out of his back pocket.

"Well, if I'm not be-god damned," he says, and he sets the tool chest down on the floor beside him as though maybe this was something wrong that he could fix if only he could find out what it was. Then he saw me. "So you're what it's all about," he says. And to Ben: "I'll by God thank you to give that gun back to me and I'll just be going."

"Don't move again," says Ed in a graveyard voice. It was like something not often brought indoors, a strange voice and not like Ed at all. If I live to be a thousand I will never forget that sound and how Ed looked.

"Now," I says. "Now, don't be scared. I just want to reason with you and I didn't know any other safe way to do it." I kept talking and reassuring him. I took a half-pint out of my hip pocket and offered him a drink and he took it. He was angry and trembling all over, but he had a drink and gave me the bottle back and pushed that greasy black hair up off his forehead. I could see the veins there. He had started to sweat, and I could smell him, a sour sweaty smell.

"I ain't scared, but I can tell you, the sheriff is sure going to hear about this. Calling a man clean out in the country and getting the drop on him."

"All I ever wanted was what you owe me," I says.

"It's hot in here," says Ed. "Let's go outside," and I was just trying to decide was that a good idea or not when Ben stepped up beside him right quick and shot him in the temple. It made my ears ring. Down he went over the toolbox, dead as Frank's old mule. Strange thing about it he didn't appear to bleed much, not near like you'd imagine.

Ben had some blood on his apron. "Right- or left-handed?" he says.

"Now's a hell of a time to ask," Ed says.

"Right-handed, but look and see if cigarette stains aren't on his right hand. I'm sure, but look."

Ben wiped the pistol real good on his apron and put it in the kid's right hand. Dead he looked like the pictures you see of those little gook soldiers over in Vietnam that don't look to be more than sixteen, but you know they are older than that. It was the way he lay and the helplessness of him that made him look so, I guess. Anyhow it gave me a shock.

"Give me your whiskey," says Ben. He took the bottle from me and wiped it and put it in the kid's left hand. Then he removed it and let it drop on the floor beside him.

"Now that's what you call a suicide," he says.

"I wonder if we should have done it here," I says. "But I guess it's all right."

"It's fine," says Ben. "I'll have to burn this apron. Reckon we can afford losing an apron?" He had slipped it off and he was rolling it up in a neat, tight roll.

"Let's get the hell out of here," I says.

We waited on the porch while Ben wiped the doorknobs. We left the door standing open and made sure Ed had the key on him before we left. I kept thinking it was a shame to mess up that shiny floor that way, and I said two or three times it would have been best to take him out to his car and do it there.

"Forget it," says Ben. "It's over and done. He owed money, he was depressed, he gets this call to go somewhere in the country and he gets to drinking and gets lost. So he drives up to ask directions or use the phone at this house—and *it's* empty. It's the last goddamn straw. So he takes his bottle out of his tool chest, has a last snort, and—pow!"

"It sure was a hard thing," says Ed. "But it was all we could do."

"What I don't like is having to wait until he's found."

They didn't have any answer for that and as it turned out it was two days before the rural mail carrier pulled in the yard. He was thinking of buying the house and later did. We got eighteen-five for it.

And somehow I figured I owed it in a way to attend the funeral. His widow hugged me and it gave me the oddest, awfulest feeling. She thanked me for coming and said how everybody in the community loved me and how she'd always remember that I came to his funeral. "Lots of people misunderstood him," she said. "A whole lots took him the wrong way, but you didn't." And she hugged me again.

And I patted her little bony back and says: "Well, I hope not, I sure hope not."

Deke Holder was the lawyer in Somerton that handled the estate. When he phoned me and wanted to know if there was anything owed us over this way I told him about the forty-eight dollars and he sent me a check. I offered to send him a bill but he said no, that nothing on that order would be necessary, that my word was all right with him.

And when you boil it down, about all any businessman has is his reputation. If he holds on to that, there is not much else that can hurt him, not in the long run it can't. We had beautiful weather that autumn. I can't remember weather more beautiful, not before, or since. □

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BRIDGES

by Leslie Norris

Imagine the bridge launched, its one foot
Clamped hard on bedrock, and such grace
In its growth it resembles flying, is flight
Almost. It is not chance when they speak
Of throwing a bridge; it leaves behind a track
Of its parallel rise and fall, solid
In quarried stone, in timber, in milled
Alloy under stress. A bridge is

The path of flight. A friend, a soldier,
Built a laughable wartime bridge over
Some unknown river. In featureless night
He threw from each sliding bank the images
Of his crossing, working in whispers, under
Failing lamps. As they built, braced spars,
Bolted taut the great steel plugs, he hoped
His bridge would stand in brawny daylight, complete,

The two halves miraculously knit. But
It didn't. Airily they floated above
Midstream, going nowhere, separate
Beginnings of different bridges, offering
The policies of inaction, neither coming
Nor going. His rough men cursed, sloped off,
Forded quite easily a mile lower.
It was shallow enough for his Land Rover.

I have a bridge over a stream. Four
Wooden sleepers, simple, direct. After rain,
Very slippery. I rarely cross right over,
Preferring to stand, watching the grain
Of running water. I like such bridges best,
River bridges on which men always stand,
In quiet places. Unless I could have that other,
A bridge launched, hovering, wondering where to land.

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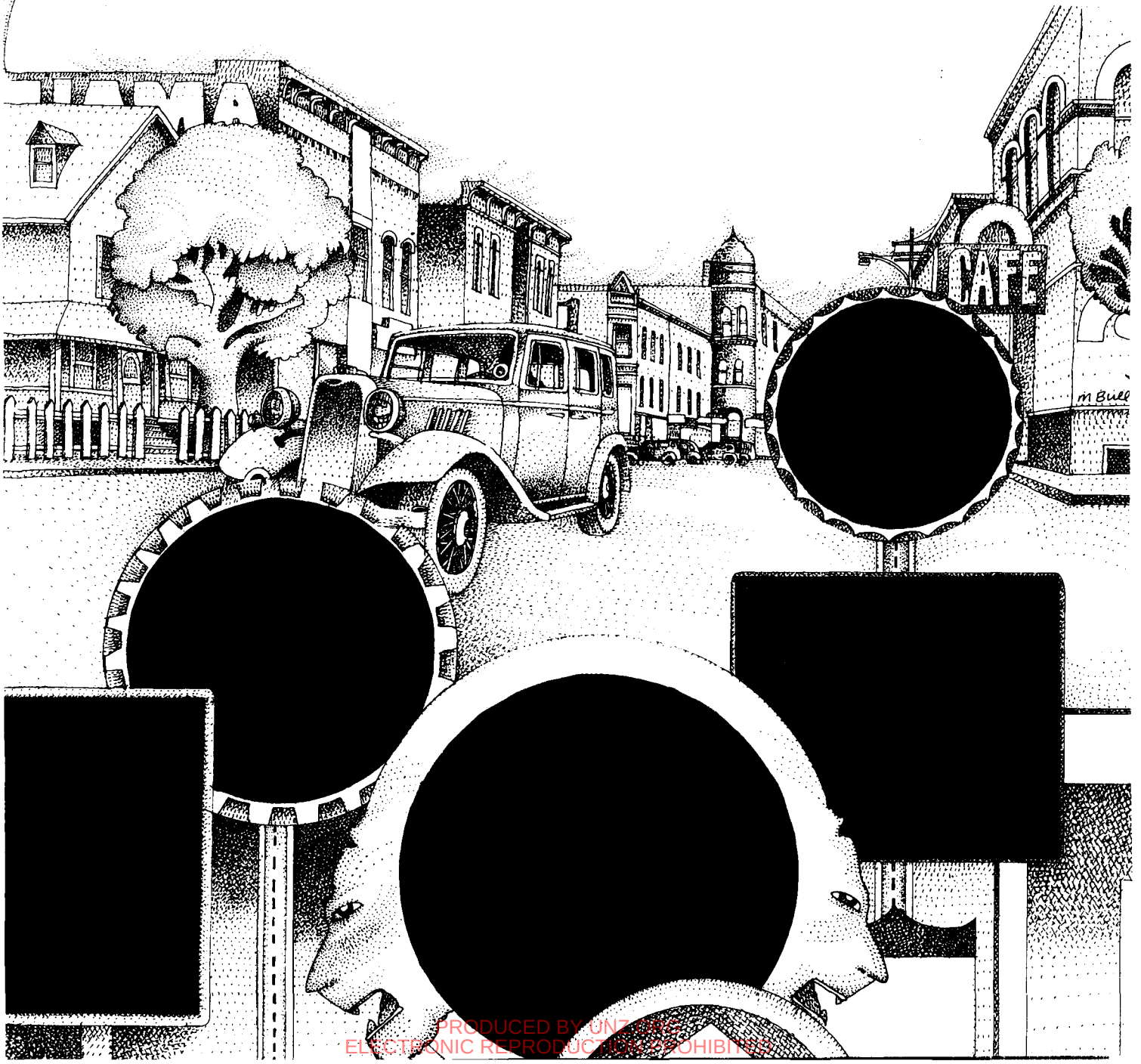
Out of small-town America

A memoir of teaching, courtship, and faith

by Abigail McCarthy



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I have to think hard to remember how it was in Mandan, North Dakota, that fall of 1936, even though Mandan is a town I love to remember. It is the place in which I was first on my own, Abigail Quigley, nobody's niece, nobody's daughter, just the new teacher in town. So it was the scene, I suppose, of my greatest adventure, the adventure of discovering just who and what I had become after twenty-one years of living. To casual tourists, Mandan, population 11,000, would seem just another rather raw and ugly Western town in the foothills of the Missouri River slope, but I remember it as a place of high, wide, blue skies and beckoning, undulating plains stretching without barrier to the horizon, a place of breezy Western friendliness, and the place in which I first fell in love with students and teaching and the whole special world of school life.

The teaching job in Mandan was like a gift from heaven to me in that Depression year. It was almost impossible for an inexperienced person to get a teaching position in those days—one which paid a salary. Some of my contemporaries went out to teach in private academies for $25 a month and their board and room. Others took secretarial and clerical jobs at $65 a month rather than accept the overloaded roles assigned to teachers in the rural towns of the Midwest. The hope of getting into a city school system was a hope to be long deferred. After a long apprenticeship in small towns, one could hope eventually to make it into Minneapolis, St. Paul, or Duluth. I was the first inexperienced teacher that Mandan—a city by Dakota standards—had employed in years; and that the job opening existed at all was due to a curious combination of circumstances.

Purely as a matter of accumulating credits, I had acquired a German major at the College of St. Catherine in St. Paul, second to my chosen major area of study, English literature. The German teacher in Mandan had suddenly, after years of trying and a week after school had started, been offered a position in California, the mecca of all schoolteachers in those days. Without so much as a by-your-leave and farewell to the school board, he had walked out the door and gotten on a train to California. Hence, Mandan had a vacancy for a teacher of German and English, an almost unheard of combination; and I, a recent college graduate still unemployed a week after school started in the fall of '36, was the only one who turned up on the lists of the teachers' agencies with those particular qualifications.

I had been sadly packing my bags after a summer of fruitless applications to return to the Twin Cities to begin graduate study at the University of Minnesota. Twenty-four hours after the telegram came from Schummer's Teachers' Agency, I was on board the Northern Pacific train for Mandan. I had a full-fledged teaching job, and I was going to get $100 a month! And, as a bonus from St. Jude, to whom I had made novena after novena, I was going west to a different state. I had a career and I had adventure as well. This is what Mandan meant to me, and it also came to mean the place where I met my husband, Gene McCarthy.

The fast-moving history of the nineteenth century had broken over Mandan in wave after wave. The town is situated near the confluence of the Heart and the Missouri rivers at the foot of the Missouri slope, where the land begins to rise slowly toward the foothills of the Rockies far to the west. It had been a trading center for the more peaceful tribes of the Dakota country, then the site of a fort during the period of Western expansion. After that it had been a cattle town before the railroad had brought in German-Russian wheat farmers and artisans to settle the area. More than half of its population and that of the surrounding area was now of this stock. They were a people with a strange history. They had been brought from Germany to Russia by Catherine the Great and settled in the Ukraine to improve the farming there. They were allowed to keep their Roman Catholic religion and their language. In almost the same way and for the same reasons they had been brought to North Dakota by the railroads, which advertised for settlers in the parts of Europe most nearly like the land to be settled along new rights of way. Dakota was wheat country, and it was believed that peasants from the Ukraine would be ideal. Although they were commonly called Russian and called themselves so—and indeed, they must have mixed with the Slavic population because many of them were squat, rather brown-skinned, and had high Slavic cheekbones—they were essentially German. It was for their sake that German was taught in the school, and it was for them, really, that I had come to Mandan.

Compared with the Minnesota towns of the period, where everything seemed to have come to a dead stop, the mood of Mandan was relaxed and cheerful. Anyone whose family had taken a chance on North Dakota in the first place had a gambler's optimism in his bones. Then, too, the combination of drought and dust storms, added to the long farm depression, had resulted in a number of federal relief programs in North Dakota. The bureaucracy of these agencies had brought some business and some bright young men to town. Agronomic scientists were working at the Department of Agriculture experimental station. In addition to the faculty of the senior and junior high schools and the two elementary schools, there was a second faculty at the state institution for juvenile offenders, which was just outside town. The county government and some state agencies were there. All this made for a transient community of young marrieds and career people who gave their business to the small stores, restaurants, rooming houses, and hotels.

Residential Mandan was rather arbitrarily divided between the west end, where the bankers, doctors, and owners of the town's businesses lived—there the houses were bigger and the streets shaded by elms—

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and the east end, where the Russians lived—railroad and creamery workers and farmers who had come to town to go on relief. The streets there were bare or lined with a few cottonwoods. Across the tracks there was a little community of tar-papered houses near the Dead Heart, a slough left when the Heart River changed its course in the restless way of Western rivers.

A family of distant cousins, the Dahnerses, found a room for me in the comfortable house of Mrs. Peter Rippel, a hardworking Hungarian woman who protested at first that her house was not good enough for a teacher. It was her way of expressing pleasure at the recommendation. It was a house of shining cleanliness, but the Dahnerses insisted that its chief virtue was that it was warm—a matter of vital concern in a climate where it is often 40 degrees below zero. Mr. Rippel was a butcher with a downtown meat market. He was rough-voiced and rough-mannered. We always thought of the house as Mrs. Rippel's because he seemed a visitor, and he eventually became one when, a few years later, he left and set up housekeeping with someone else, in the east end.

I came from a teaching family, and from my earliest years, schools and students, books and learning, had been staples of family conversation—so it never occurred to me that I was anything but lucky to be teaching.

Mandan was a good place for a teacher to start. Professionalism was encouraged by the young principal, Mr. Neff, and was practiced by the veteran teachers, who, with few exceptions, loved teaching. Now, thirty-odd years later, I can still see those teachers and hear their voices. In wide-open Mandan they were free of social restrictions. Through them and my relatives I soon found myself going out a good deal, sometimes dating the young business and professional men, sometimes other teachers. My life filled up. I liked Mandan and its people.

I was the youngest teacher on the faculty, the first inexperienced one to come to Mandan in many years, and something of a novelty. The students found me more inclined than the older teachers to listen and laugh in the after-school hours, and many took to "helping" me then. For my part, I discovered the wonderful zaniness of thirteen- and fourteen-year-old boys and willingly spent hours with them.

It was in Mandan that I met my first political priest—a bald, roundheaded German Benedictine, Father Hildebrand Eickhoff. He had a passion for improving the lot of his people and a great contempt for the "cheese-knifers," as he called the Protestants of the town Establishment. Some years before my arrival it had occurred to Father Hildebrand that when the German-Russian and a few Irish children left the safe environs of St. Joseph's parochial school for the public high school, they were delivered into the hands of the cheese-knifers who controlled the school board and the teachers who would mold their adolescent minds. The pattern of public education in Mandan was typical of its evolution in this country. The public school was Protestant, and the regular election of Protestant ministers to the school board guaranteed that fact. (It is ironic to think that the Catholic school system in this country would never have come into being if the children of Catholic immigrants had not been compelled to take part in the Bible services and hymn-singing which gave a Protestant cast to public school life.) Although the states of the Northwest Territory and those of the West banned religion from the schools in their charters, the close supervision of textbooks and the seasonal celebrations by vigilantly Protestant school boards tended to maintain the Protestant flavor. The only Catholic teachers were ones with local family connections. The solution was simple. There were more Catholic German-Russians in town than anyone else. Father Hildebrand urged some of his parishioners to run for the school board and recommended them as good candidates to the rest of his flock. And the majority ruled. The new school board selected my principal, William Neff, who had a master's degree from Notre Dame and proved to be a really fine educator. The board began to elect a few Catholic teachers to fill vacancies on the faculty as they occurred.

One of Mr. Neff's first suggestions to me was that I might like to drop in and see Father Hildebrand some evening. "He reads a lot," he said, "and he likes to talk to the teachers." I thought this an intriguing idea because I had never known a priest socially. In the days of his prime, our pastor in Wabasha, Minnesota, where I was reared, had ministered to us in an aloof, irascible, and authoritarian way.

So I went to visit Father Hildebrand with lively curiosity. The square brick rectory sat between the church and the school in a yard almost bare of grass in those years of the great dust storms. I was aware of the housekeeper's surveillance as I walked self-consciously up the walk and was taken aback when she snatched open the door, stared at me with obvious disapproval, ushered me in without a word, and disappeared, leaving me standing in the dim hall. But Father Hildebrand emerged almost at once from the back of the house. He was dressed in the Benedictine habit he wore at home, with its long scapular, cowl, and black leather cincture. He gestured after the housekeeper with his cigar, tapped his forehead to indicate his low opinion of her mental stability, bared stubby brown teeth in a grin, said, "Jealous, you know," and beckoned me into his study. I was mildly shocked, but I accepted the remark in the matter-of-fact tone in which it was delivered. It was clear to me almost at once that Father Hildebrand, living happily and autocratically in his little Benedictine community of two assistants, had no problems with celibacy—that he simply had a rather obsessive but necessary housekeeper who was jealous of every-

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one: the assistants, visiting teachers, the janitor, anyone who took the time of the pastor. In her opinion he was a being who should not have been at the beck and call of ordinary people.

The study was a room I grew to know well. There was a worn sofa, a utilitarian mission-type desk, and an old cracked leather chair where Father habitually sat indulging his passion for reading. There were books everywhere, on the desk, on the sofa, in piles on the floor. He ordered them directly from London—from Longmans, Green and Sheed & Ward—and from Herder in Germany and in St. Louis. He devoured history and biography. He accepted Hilaire Belloc, G. K. Chesterton, Christopher Dawson, Carlton J. H. Hayes, Christopher Hollis, the Sheeds without question. He was fascinated by Amintore Fanfani and especially interested in the scholarship which was re-examining the Reformation and the Middle Ages, abolishing old myths, and discovering that nationalism and new economic systems had as much to do with the conflicts in those times as religion.

He loved to share what he was reading. He would read and paraphrase and jump from book to book, saying, "Listen to this, girl, listen to this!" And he always sent me home with books to read, insisting darkly that they hadn't taught me much in "that place." To him my alma mater, St. Catherine's—non-German and non-Benedictine—was not quite orthodox. St. Catherine's had been founded by the sister of John Ireland, the great Americanizing archbishop of the Midwest, in the same quarter century as Radcliffe was founded, and was in the mold of the "seven sisters" colleges. I think that Father Hildebrand thought our professors—St. Joseph nuns with degrees from Oxford, the Sorbonne, and the like, as well as from the great American universities—our Phi Beta Kappa chapter, our accreditation, were all evidences of truckling to the cheese-knifers and their values.

In a sense he was right. The St. Catherine's I left in 1936 was a very fine liberal arts college that happened to be Catholic. Those of us who were graduated from St. Catherine's in the twilight years of Mother Antonia, its foundress, were unaware of how unusual our school was for its day. Mother Antonia was a woman of amazing energy and intellect, with a passion for excellence. When she was chosen to head the fledgling St. Catherine's, she was determined that it was going to be the very best college possible.

I was the beneficiary of what Mother Antonia had accomplished, but during my college years I, like my classmates, rather took it for granted. We did not realize how recent such a good education for women was, nor what boldness Mother Antonia's achievement required in the world of the Catholic Church. Through the first three decades of this century, a time when university education for women was still for the few, and thirty years before Catholic University allowed nuns to register at all (and then only on a separate campus), she sent her nuns to the world's best universities. When she wanted a young sister to study at Juilliard in New York and another to take her master's at the library school of Columbia University, she learned that the Archbishop of New York would not allow a convent in his archdiocese to harbor any nuns attending such godless institutions. She rented an apartment for them and told them to consider it their convent.

We came out of St. Catherine's with an awakened interest in the arts and sciences of our time because of the strong liberal arts orientation of the college. We came out prepared for a world of specialization, prepared professionally to be journalists, writers, teachers, social workers, musicians, technicians, librarians. We wanted and expected to be part of our world. We believed in and had benefited from the New Deal; some of us were beneficiaries of the National Youth Administration. Dorothy Day's *Catholic Worker* was beginning to be circulated on the campus, but we were aware of the movement as a novel and attractively direct form of social work rather than as a movement of social criticism. When we thought of the terrible problems of our time in terms of Catholic solutions at all, we were likely to take the view of *Commonweal,* the liberal Catholic weekly, which was strongly against Franco and fascism and pro-Roosevelt.

Father Hildebrand came out of a different tradition. He was a Benedictine of St. John's Abbey in central Minnesota, the largest monastery of the oldest order of monks in the Western world.

In the 1930s St. John's was linked to whatever was going on in the Christian world. Men in monastic life, no matter how remote the monasteries, are in touch with their counterparts everywhere. Their brightest scholars are sent off to Rome or some other world center for advanced study; their missionaries go off to Asia or Mexico or the Caribbean, as well as to remote parishes in North Dakota, and come home again. Therefore St. John's had been touched by many trends and had begun to play a significant part in a few. At St. John's the liturgical movement took American form and became united with the social action movement. These movements were, briefly, the first structured efforts to cope with the rediscovery of the Church as a whole people—not as a hierarchy with a ruling few and a passive many—and of Christianity as the religion of God come to earth to renew all things—not a religion of man going to heaven.

The college of St. John's University—Gene's school—had grown from the monastery and was unique among Minnesota colleges in the way it became a lifelong second home for the men who attended it. Perhaps this was because a significant number of the students entered the monastery and were always there, in a more unchanging way than alumni at other universities. And the Benedictine

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professors stayed there, grew old, and finally gave their names to headstones in the graveyard where the men of St. John's walked with their wives when they came back to visit. The graduates of St. John's University thought of themselves as part of the Benedictine family.

Benedictine parish priests like Father Hildebrand espoused the new ideals as far as they understood them. The boys and girls of Mandan were going to learn history and literature from people who had a world view, he insisted. He looked forward to the establishment of cooperative housing projects and credit unions. His first step was to have an addition built to the parish school with the help of parish labor. Those who had laid bricks and nailed two-by-fours were credited with contributions to the church in the amount of man-hours they had spent. He computed the time according to the highest union scale, with time-and-a-half for overtime. In the annual report that year, plasterers and Depression-ruined farmers came out as bigger contributors than the town doctors, merchants, and undertakers.

It was through Father Hildebrand that Gene, by then principal of a small Minnesota high school, came to Mandan as head of the English department in the fall of 1938. I had aspired to that position and was inclined to resent his coming. "He's a genius," Hildebrand said, "a fine man from a good family. Lots of priests and nuns. Went through college in three years."

"So did I," I said defensively, but he ignored me.

"He's at Mass every morning," he continued. "Never misses devotions either."

"Why isn't he a priest?" I asked.

That daunted Father a little. He pulled on his cigar.

"I don't know. I don't know," he said.

It was something of a mystery to us both. In the days prior to World War II men who went to daily Mass at any time other than during Lent were either old men preparing for death or seminarians home on vacation.

But Father Hildebrand brightened as he expatiated on his plans. The superintendent of schools, Mr. Gould, would go eventually. Neff, the principal, would take his place, and there would be McCarthy, ready for the principalship.

If this was the plan, it should have been reassuring to Mr. Neff, but there was an implicit threat in the situation. Father Hildebrand was developing the instincts of a true political boss. I met Mr. Neff in the school hall one day. "What do you think of this McCarthy?" he asked. I wasn't at all sure what I thought except that he was too handsome to be true, but I didn't think that was relevant to the conversation. The new teacher seemed indifferent to the buzz of attention he caused among the young women of the town and unaware of my own critical attention at English department meetings where he seemed to slough off our serious concerns. In an effort to know him better, I had halfheartedly schemed to put myself in his way at school affairs and at church, then, in fits of ambivalence, withdrawn at the crucial moments of meeting.

Mr. Neff offered his own assessment gloomily, "I think he's a wolf in sheep's clothing," he said.

"Oh, no," I said indignantly. I had already decided that Gene McCarthy was some sort of inaccessible saint with a mysterious purpose of his own.

"Not that kind of wolf," he replied.

I understood then and confided what Father Hildebrand had said about the eventual superintendency. He cheered up a bit.

The new teacher and I finally began to talk to each other, and then to know each other a little on a train trip home to Minnesota at Christmastime. This ride together was not a matter of accident, but the scheming was on Gene's part, not mine. He refused a car trip with another male teacher, citing incurable car sickness, which made it necessary for him to take the same train that I was taking.

The train left Mandan in late morning. We had lunch together and talked all the way across the prairies of eastern Dakota and western Minnesota. When he left the train at St. Cloud, Minnesota, I think we were both sure we were in love.

Companions on a train trip are like the only inhabitants of a world. In some ways on that journey we grew to know each other as no one else knew either of us. When I admitted that I thought him aloof and disparaging of the teachers and students with whom I was so vitally involved, Gene made a confession of another kind. He said that he struggled with a deep disinclination to accept life—a state he later described as being neither "hot nor cold" toward it, "an inertia of years." He marked it as beginning with an incident when he was twelve and after a heavy rain had come upon a baby sparrow thrown from its nest to the sidewalk. He stepped on it and watched the life go from it. That was all there was to life, he thought, that faint flicker.

During that Christmas vacation Gene struggled with a poem in which he compared me to the wild rose which grows everywhere in Minnesota, along the country roads and the railroad tracks, thrusting its way out of the gravel or the cinders, "born of life, affirming life, guarded by thorns, but a rose." A long time later he showed it to me. The lines had begun to blur on the much folded and creased piece of paper he had carried about with him. I have it still.

After vacation Gene asked me to go to a movie. This caused a wave of excitement among the Rippel roomers, to whom our new rapprochement was a surprise. "I never!" exclaimed one of the girls there. "The guy is human after all." But we never saw the movie. After the first five minutes Gene said, "You aren't really interested in this silly thing, are you?"

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And I, who still like to know how even the most puerile television script ends, said, "No, of course not." He thought I must be impatient with the entertainment he had chosen. I was afraid he would think me hopelessly lowbrow if I said I would like to stay.

"What's the matter?" asked Joe Reis, a high school student who worked as an usher. "You seen it before?"

On another night we went skating together. It was bitterly cold, and the rink—a boarded and flooded vacant lot in south Mandan—was deserted. Naked trees and lonely houses, each with a single lit window, bordered it. There was one floodlight high on a pole. We skated in and out of its pale light, veering together for brief colloquies which sent our words in short puffs of mist into the freezing night air, and then, too cold to stay still, stroked away again over the rough ice.

"It was such a tentative coming together," Gene said later.

A month after that Christmas vacation in 1938, Gene asked me to marry him. ("I looked at the calendar today to make sure of the dates when I will see you again," he wrote me a year later, "and came across February 3 circled in red.") We sat together in the little attic living room with the fierce Dakota wind lashing branches against the roof so close to us and solemnly pledged our lives to each other. I had never expected to be so happy. We talked a little vaguely of marriage in two years and made plans that were half dreams. In those bleak Depression years we all thought of our system as having failed us, and schemes to renew it were everywhere in the air. Gene believed in renewal through the rural life movement, and I was ready to assent to whatever he thought right. We would live on a farm—but, of course, a farm like none that either of us had ever known, a farm which would become the center of a community of writers and scholars.

It was a very happy spring. Always given to sporadic bouts of piety, I became a steady attendant at daily Mass partly to please Gene. "It must be love if it gets you up early," sniffed one of the teachers. Gene bought a car, a secondhand 1937 blue Chevrolet. The car enlarged our world, allowing us to roam and explore the prairies and hills together. A snapshot taken at the time shows the two of us beside the car, looking very much like the hero and heroine of a 1930s movie. Gene has the conventional good looks, the black wavy hair parted on the side, the handsome smiling face; he has on the large casual overcoat and carelessly worn muffler of the decade. He looks shyly pleased. I am wearing a coat I remember well—black wool with puffed sleeves and a stand-up Persian lamb collar. My hair is upswept in a roll on either side and crowned with an oversized pillbox fashionably aslant. The car is mud-splashed, and behind it is a tangle of bare trees and vines. The picture must have been taken beside the Dead Heart River; in Dakota trees grow thick only in the river bottoms. It is a sunny picture except that my hands are tightly clasped as if something precious might escape.

As the weather grew warmer we became inseparable, and our pleasure in each other was reflected in the people we knew. We became favorite chaperons for the homeroom picnics which multiplied every spring, and I sat happily with the girls watching Gene play softball with the boys.

At Easter I went home with Gene to Watkins, Minnesota. He had told me about his family, each one, and I was ready to endow them with all the extraordinary qualities I found in him. From Gene, who described him with a sort of amused respect, I knew that his father was a cattle buyer and superintended the family farm, that he was quick-tempered, irascible, but sentimentally warmhearted. I had no clear picture of his mother—her note of invitation had been painstakingly correct—but Gene seemed very close to her, and I thought of her as classically devout and home-loving. There was Mildred, his older sister, who had been away from home for a long time, now married and living in Panama. That seemed a romantic circumstance to me, and I warmed to the idea of Mildred; Gene said I sometimes reminded him of her. There was Marian, also a teacher, who would be home for the vacation, and Austin, his younger brother, who was at medical school and would not be there.

Mentally I pictured the family as revolving around Gene. And I, as belonging to him, would become part of its center—a fond conceit but understandable considering my state of mind in those days. I had always been at home with older people, having grown up in an extended family of grandmothers, great-aunts, aunts, uncles, and cousins, and I looked forward to being accepted by Gene's father and mother. The acceptance was to come eventually but not just then, and in ways I did not foresee.

The McCarthy house was a two-story frame on Watkins' second street, a house with a small screened porch across the front and two windows like eyes above; its replicas line thousands of Midwestern streets. Gene's father had built it with the help of Gene's grandfather, a carpenter when he was not playing his violin. Gene's grandfather was known to the family and all the relatives as Carty-Pa; he and his strong-willed wife, Carty-Ma, had moved into the house before Gene's father and mother could get married and come home to it. Carty-Ma's redoubtable spirit seemed to fill the house she had dominated until she died at the age of ninety-seven. Her sayings were quoted, and her ways were still followed.

In those days of foreclosures and unemployment, it was something for a house to have survived, well-roofed and warm, as a family home and a haven for the children who had gone out to make a living in a world devoid of warm welcomes. That was how I saw

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it then, and I tried eagerly that vacation to enter into its life. The gaiety of Mildred, called Mid, still lived in the house, and Austin, clearly the apple of his parents' and sister's eyes, was present in his likes, dislikes, the memories of his boyhood. Gene's mother, a neatly and stockily built woman in her early sixties, was sweet and welcoming. Her features were strong and very like Gene's except that her face was broad and she had the dark ivory cast of complexion from her south German ancestors, not Gene's Irish fairness. Her almond eyes were the brown of shiny buttons and sometimes made me uneasy with their steady regard. Her voice had a musical timbre—she had, I think, sung in the choir in her youth—and she interspersed her steady conversation with inquiring little hums. She seemed to find her worth in doing things for us all, especially in feeding us, and she was constantly jumping up from the table to bring us something else, some pickles or another kind of jelly. It was only later that I learned she still clung to the hope that Gene would one day be a priest; his going so far as to bring a girl home was a threat she was not ready to face.

"Doesn't Abbie remind you of Mid?" Gene asked one dinnertime when he was amused at my recounting of some St. Paul story.

His mother stopped dead still and regarded me with an opaque look.

"No," she said.

Marian I liked at once. She was Gene's senior by five years, and she was stocky like her mother but blue-eyed and placid. Gene's father called Mrs. McCarthy "Mom," and his attitude toward her was laced through with a condescending teasing which passed for rough affection. He seemed to look on any show of tenderness or emotional dependence as weakness. When Gene, half-shamed by his teasing, left me behind once during the visit, his father snorted with approval. His appraisal of his fellowmen was almost universally sour, and he had the habit of limning them unforgettably with biting, homely witticisms. He belonged to that generation of men for whom the Depression was the last defeat—who had struggled out of bitterly hardworking childhoods into moderate success in the early part of the century only to have their world changed radically by the First World War. So in time I came to feel toward Dad McCarthy something of the affection and understanding that his own children felt.

I came away from that first Easter vacation in Watkins with the feeling that the alienation of which Gene sometimes spoke had its roots in his home and his town. Watkins was nothing like Wabasha, the old Mississippi River town in which I had grown up—restricted, provincial, but nonetheless full of variety, the acknowledgment of differences, and a certain respect for eccentricity. Watkins was more like a European country village, almost literally transplanted from rural Germany to rural Meeker County, Minnesota. It had existed as an entity during the lifetime of one man, Gene's uncle by marriage, who had started it by building a general store along the new Soo Line Railroad. Almost everyone spoke English with a slight German twist or accent. There was little place or understanding for the exceptional there. Yet on long walks during those few days Gene had shown me that there was beauty there, too. Some of his best poetry stems from the memory of that countryside and its creatures:

> The sky was a kite,
> I flew it on a string, winding
> it in to see its blue, again
> to count the whirling swallows,
> and read the patterned scroll of blackbirds turning
> to check the markings of a hawk.

As for his loneliness, I was sure that was over, as was he. After we had made our commitment to each other, I tried to give him my friends with both hands, and they had quickly become friends of his. "Your letter, filled as it was with a zest for life, helped me over a bad spot again," he wrote. "I need you so much that it would be selfish if you did not have so much understanding and capacity to live that it can run over to others. The sky is closer now and the wind seems to be blowing it across the brushy tops of the trees, catching out the dust and smoke—just as you do with people, letting me see them as better and more human and ultimately good—goodness has been theoretical to me for so long."

Riding through the countryside that spring or sitting on the bluffs looking down on the Missouri and watching the birds fly north, we made our plans. We would try to find new teaching jobs in Minnesota at better salaries—near each other and the university, we hoped, so that we could drive to Saturday classes. Perhaps we could augment our earnings by speaking and writing.

By the end of the school year we were no longer willing to wait two years to get married, but the practical problems were mountainous. In Mandan I earned $105 a month for the school term; Gene, about $125. After expenses I had only a very few hundred dollars a year for clothes, trips home, and summer school at the University of Minnesota, where I had started my graduate work. Gene had to return to summer school, too, if he was to finish his M.A. that year.

Gene's sister Marian wrote that there was a vacancy in the English department in the high school in Litchfield, Minnesota, the town where she and her friend Harriet were teaching. She thought it might pay $1200. Gene suggested that I apply. With reluctance, for I hated to think of leaving Mandan where I had been happy, I did so and received a favorable answer. Our hopes rose. Gene would surely find a Minnesota principalship once he got his master's that summer.

In a way that summer of 1939 gave us back a part

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of the college year we had missed. We strolled the campus between classes, ate lunch in the crowded student union, or picnicked under the elms on the Knoll, a traditional trysting place. We studied together in the pleasant library reading rooms. We found old friends among the summer students and made some new ones.

In the university atmosphere our strenuous efforts to economize seemed more like moves in a game than grim necessity. We pooled our food money and tried to eat on eighty-seven cents apiece each day. This strange total came from the prices set in the nearby student eating places. Walgreen's Drugstore featured a twelve-cent breakfast that usually consisted of juice, raisin toast, and coffee but was sometimes varied with sweet rolls or one pancake. An old account sheet torn from the back of one of Gene's notebooks shows that we were more often successful than not. It was possible to get an adequate lunch—sometimes a dish of stew, sometimes soup and a sandwich—at the student union. We could eat dinner for fifty cents at the Varsity, the Duchess, the Gopher, and other depressingly similar establishments.

Gene was awarded his M.A. at the University of Minnesota summer school graduation, walking across the stage in his rented academic gown, chin outthrust in the self-conscious gesture which had grown so familiar to me and which he never outgrew. I was very proud of him. But he found the endless job hunt that followed very distasteful, and I suffered through every interview with him in prospect and retrospect, often waiting in the car and praying dutifully, only too aware of what he was enduring. If one survived the scrutiny of the administration, there remained the ordeal of interrogation by one or the other school board member, who tended to have cranky theories of his own. Gene could not and would not banter with them or try to win them over, nor did I want him to. He would not have been Gene if he had.

In the end Gene went back to Mandan for a second year and I took the job in Litchfield. We wrote every day and sent each other special delivery letters for Sundays. I used to tear the letters open and skim them quickly, first for the assurances of love, and then, like any exile, for the news of friends left behind. Gene had gone back, no longer an observer, but involved—usually with affectionate amusement, sometimes with genuine concern—in the lives of our friends. He related everything faithfully, with a sure eye for the flavor of occurrences and the nuances of relationships. That was a year of meeting and leave-taking—at Thanksgiving, at Christmas, at weddings, at the semester break, and at Easter; our letters, alternately hopeful and discouraged, went back and forth trying to share everything we saw and heard. All the images of his later poems are in them: the identification with trees and the preoccupation with their bones—the black of box-elder twigs and the burnished dark red of rose branches in winter; the sky and its closeness; the perception of the earth turning and the relativity of time; the imprisonment in self—"Does it frighten you to think of having to be yourself for eternity—perhaps I should be frightened of joining my life to yours as an influence on your endless future." Sometimes he included fragments of poems, half-worked-out, abortive with words crossed out one, two, three times until he found one good enough. He was fascinated with words and used to carry a slip of paper in his breast pocket to list those he wanted either to remember or to check the meaning of.

He read voraciously but novels did not interest him except as expressions of philosophy. He abandoned Mann's *Joseph* trilogy, and when I wrote that I was reading *War and Peace*, he took it out of the library—but "I only read the first few chapters," he wrote. "You can find his whole theory of war in the last few pages."

It was as if he measured everything except the earth itself against an abstract pattern of perfection, and he found that pattern in the teachings of the Church. He wrote that he wished that two of our friends whom he found most congenial were Catholics. He feared, he said, that one of them was inclined toward an atheistic humanism which, he reminded me, Dostoevsky had called the "mark of the Antichrist," and that he found it hard to oppose. He wished that he himself knew more history—and more of the Church and history—so that he could lead our friend to consider it as giving meaning "to life and humanity."

Although I was sure that it was proof that he was better and finer than any other man, his need to find transcendent meaning sometimes frightened me.

He wrote that heaven seemed attainable when love approached purity and unselfishness in human beings. I felt unworthy in thinking so, but I did not want to be that pure and unselfish. I much preferred it when he wrote, "I like to watch you run, I would be so glad to see you running toward me now." Or "Tonight you were there, a presence just outside the pool of lamplight where I was reading."

My real life was lived in that daily exchange of letters and in our trips to meet each other, but my teaching life went on nonetheless. I would probably have liked Litchfield if I had not taught first in Mandan, but as it was, I was acutely unhappy. I first took a room with a childless couple who lived in a small bungalow. To get to my room I had to pass through their living room, which was cluttered with a welter of furniture bedecked with crocheted and ruffled doilies. My landlady wanted companionship and was annoyed at my retreating each night to my room and my typewriter. I was bent on writing for money and I did manage to sell articles to *The Atlantic* and *Commonweal* that fall, but I found it hard to pray and read and write

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separated only by a thin door from her humming and sighing and rustling about.

In a sense teachers were, as I wrote in my *Atlantic* piece that year, migratory laborers. However much they might like the community, however deep their involvement with their students, they had no permanent place there. Their only security lay in their contracts, negotiated anew each year. They had no tenure, no pension plan, and no reasonable expectations of advancement. If they wished to better themselves, they had to move on. They were, in reality, cogs—and easily replaceable cogs—in a machine which was of institutional, recreational, and financial value to the town in which they taught.

School superintendents were really managers hired to supervise one of the town's biggest businesses. This was vividly demonstrated in the first teachers' meeting I attended in Litchfield. We were instructed in the care of the plant and the necessity of cooperating with the janitors. We were told, for example, that we were expected to leave all the shades in our rooms at an even level at the end of the day. We were told that our absence records were of more importance than anything else in judging our performance, since state aid was prorated on the number of pupil-days reported. We were also told that we were expected to spend three weekends out of every four in Litchfield, since the town paid us and expected us to spend our money there. To assure the town that we were really earning our salaries, we were instructed to be in our classrooms by eight thirty in the morning and not to leave them before five. The school football games and basketball games were a great source of revenue, and we were all expected to work at them, taking tickets, guarding gates, ushering. After this initial meeting, the junior high school principal, a woman, gathered the women teachers together to instruct them in the morality expected of them by the community. We were not to smoke, drink, or go to local dances, and it was strongly advised that we attend the local church. She also discussed the necessity of modest clothing.

As head of the English department in which I had worked, Gene had written one of my recommendations. Now he wrote me that my determined and extensive self-assertion was no doubt placing my new administration in a state of trepidation—and placing his fine statements about my cooperativeness in the balance. He added that he loved me for it all, and that I should be kind to the poor schoolmen!

I waged my own fight with the Establishment. The younger teachers had joined and given new life to the local chapter of the American Federation of Teachers, which had languished after the departure of the former superintendent, a confirmed liberal. The Federation was tarred with the Communist brush in those days, but it was the only agency of solidarity for teachers; without it each one dealt singly with the administration and the school board.

The superintendent met with us to deplore professional people joining a labor union. I remember the courageous answer Nellie Allen, the oldest member of the English department, gave him: "A professional person takes responsibility for his work and his working hours, Mr. Harbo," she said. "I am not a professional person as long as I in effect punch a time clock. A professional person also sets his own fee. My fee, that is my salary, is set for me by others. And I must have some way of bargaining with them."

I was elected president of the local because I was willing to speak out and also because I did not have as much to lose as the married men. We tried in my brief tenure to set up relations with the only other union in town, that of the railroad men. But they were irritated and put off by our attempt to make our problems seem similar to theirs. We sought a salary scale and a regular system of raises, but our proposal was tossed aside by the administration and the board. There was only so much money for salaries, we were told, and it always had to balance off. If someone got more money, someone else would have to go.

But to many struggling with the problems of urban schools today, Litchfield would have seemed a dream school, and indeed it was very good. It had become a regional school to which over half of the students were bused from smaller outlying communities. In order to serve all the students, there were both college preparatory and general education courses, but the stigma of the track system was avoided in that these were electives on the part of the students, although the guidance counselors tried hard to steer students who were not capable of the college preparatory work away from it. There was a large library and a flourishing library program; there was a full-time guidance teacher who worked with each homeroom adviser; there was a remedial reading teacher.

During Thanksgiving vacation, 1939, Gene brought me an engagement ring. His mother wept when she saw it, but I, like all engaged girls, thought it the most wonderful ring in the world. I spent much time admiring it to the amusement of my students. It solved my problems of status; I was now definitely, formally engaged.

We could not marry for several reasons. Our practical problems proved stubbornly incapable of solution. The hope of the principalship in Mandan had disappeared. Despite Gene's dogged efforts—he applied for opening after opening—nothing had matured. One salary would not allow us to marry and discharge our family obligations, but the idea that we might both teach was unthinkable in those days. The competition for employment was so keen that a married woman working was thought of as taking the bread and livelihood away from the head of another family.

Everything was complicated by the shadow of approaching war; there was talk of a draft, and Gene

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would be subject to it. Then came a new and hopeful possibility which changed the direction of all our plans.

When, late in the spring of 1940, Gene was offered a position teaching education and economics at St. John's, it seemed to us that God was answering our prayers in a way better than we could have dared to hope. Our plans of farming as an adjunct to teaching had always been meant as more than a practical solution to our personal problems; they were our answer to what we saw as the need for Christian renewal of society. The return to St. John's meant that we might join the Christian community there, which was gaining new life. The salary was not very large, but it was supplemented by room and board. For the first time Gene could really save money. Litchfield was not far away; we could see each other often. Perhaps, perhaps even by the second semester, we could marry. We drove through the little street of "Flynnville" near the campus in the dusk, picking out the nicer houses, hoping that the abbey might substitute one of them for Gene's room when we married. At last we could be decisive. We would not wait beyond June of the next year to be married.

Going back to St. John's was not only going home but also a source of liberation for Gene. He had increasingly come to feel, as I had so painfully in Litchfield, that serving the great and impersonal machine of public education—no matter how good our relations with our students or how enlightened our classroom teaching—was only half living. It was not a way in which we could make a fundamental change in our world. Gene still thought of this in terms of secularism—the all-inclusive term used by Catholic social thinkers to describe the deliberate exclusion of religion or any coherent philosophy of life from education and the world of work. It was generally held that bourgeois spirit and unchristian individualism had both resulted from the lack of any Christian social theory and had in turn brought about the injustices of laissez-faire capitalism, materialism, the breakdown of the family, and the depersonalization of society.

Gene's application was couched in those terms. Teaching in a public school, he wrote, meant that one was only half teaching since the most important questions could never be raised and the most important reasons never given.

Gene had gone out from St. John's in 1935 into the world of the Great Depression, of social upheaval, without any very adequate preparation. His world had been the uncomplicated and wholly Catholic and ethnic world of Watkins and St. John's. At the time he graduated, St. John's was a small denominational institution of no particular distinction, although the monastery to which it was attached was beginning to have a worldwide reputation. It was a small college of only three hundred students, half of whom were clerics, as the Benedictines called their seminarians, and it had never been accredited because the abbot believed that with accreditation would come secular interference.

But in the fall of 1940 St. John's was expanding and building its faculty and well on its way to becoming a center of adult education, a center for the discussion of, and attack on, the social problems of the day. All this had been brought about largely through the efforts of one man—Dom Virgil Michel. Father Virgil had come back to St. John's as dean during Gene's second and last years in college, but his effect on the students was then largely indirect. Gene's own interests were in English literature and economics, interests which did not engage much of Father Virgil's attention at the time. As a student, Gene was affected more than by anything else by the renewed emphasis on the liturgy—all the ceremonies radiating out from the Eucharist as the sacred sign of the unity of all men—and by the social institutes—weekend adult education meetings. At these he acquired his interest in the cooperative movement and the rural life movement as cures for social ills.

But Gene was only nineteen when he graduated, and he had spent only three years in college. His classmates of the time described him as a loner and an observer. He did not date and he did not drink; he drew some criticism for sitting silent and listening through dormitory bull sessions. It was assumed that he was weighing a religious vocation. But he had thrown himself into his studies and into athletics, in both of which he excelled, and his college fame rested on his star quality in almost any sport. Although he had turned in his football suit after a disagreement with the coach, he ranked as an "all-state" player in baseball and hockey. He was president of the Scribblers Union, a club organized for those who aspired to write for the college paper and yearbook, and was one of the editors of the latter.

In the academic field he had had no rival. His senior biographical sketch records this in an excruciatingly arch style:

> Gene was not satisfied with finishing college in three years. The really breathtaking accomplishment is yet to be recorded. In order not to heighten the suspense too much, we will state now . . . that this jolly and towering Gael made local collegiate history by registering eight A's in his classwork two years ago, and has continued that splendid work. To him the marking alphabet of professors terminates with *Alpha*.

When Gene returned to St. John's in the fall of 1940, he returned as someone very much more involved in life and as an active participant in the informed discussions which nightly raged in the prefect's room. Basic to these discussions were the ideas of Father Virgil, who had died the year before but who had left a great blueprint for the renewal of society in his writings and in his research. Ultimately, it was clear to Father Virgil that if one is aware of the implications of his

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worship, one must be led to the need to bring about a more perfect community among men. This, in his time and in his terms, meant a concern with social action.

The regular gatherings in the St. John's prefect's room included men who had been either contemporaries of Father Virgil's or his students; it included men who had been stimulated by him to pursue ideas of their own. How much Gene delighted in the give and take of the nightly discussions was reflected in the letters to me, usually written when he had just returned to his room.

> Father Walter was in good anti-clerical form tonight—he attacked the monastery faction which favors a complete turning to the contemplative life and the liturgy—as escapists—asserting that most of the leaders of the movement are escapists—covering up their inability to teach, preach, etcetera. He made a good point against private schools, too—explaining that they are being displaced by state schools because they have neglected to educate the poor—he includes this as one of the causes for the loss of faith among the poor during the Reformation. He thinks the same criticism can be levied on the Catholic schools today. He also took two or three swipes at the liturgists who over-emphasize the appointments, vestments, candles, altars, at the expense of the spirit. All in all, it was a good destructive evening.

I could see the scene, the ambience very much like that in Father Hildebrand's study. The prefect's room was a very masculine retreat. Father Walter, whose field was history and who was dean of discipline, would be presiding genially. He was the "Mr. Chips" of St. John's—the man everyone came back to see—an expansive man, easily excited by ideas. He would sit, feet apart, using his cigar to punctuate his points, occasionally brushing absently at the ashes which fell on the scapular of his habit. Father Martin would be there, still fresh from his studies at Harvard, full of enthusiasm for the cooperative experiments and the folk university at Antigonish in Nova Scotia or for the latest news from Monsignor Ligutti, who was establishing cooperatives and credit unions among the poverty-stricken farmers and coal miners in Iowa. There would also be Father Emeric Lawrence, a teacher of French then serving as chaplain to the students and beginning to try his hand at writing on spirituality. And occasionally Father Godfrey Diekmann, a more austere scholar, then the new editor of *Orate Fratres.*

Emerson Hynes, who had returned with his M.A. from Notre Dame the year before, was the unofficial leader of the lay faculty. I could see him, already every inch the campus guru, tapping his pipe and drawing on it meditatively before he made his own points in his slow-speaking, definitive way. Father Ernest Kilzer, head of the philosophy department, would nod, underline, and redefine these points like a true scholastic philosopher.

Emerson had been a freshman in college with Gene. It would be hard to measure Emerson's influence on Gene, but their lives were intertwined then and never really separated again. (He became Gene's legislative assistant in the Senate.) Emerson's preeminence sprang from his firm intention to live out his beliefs in distributist-agrarianism and the need for the decentralization of society. He was committed to the lay apostolate and the "one foot on the land" theory. He planned to marry a St. Catherine's graduate coincidentally named Arleen McCarty. They had leased ten acres of abbey land where they planned to raise their own food and were building a cinder-block house with the rather desultory help of other faculty members and local craftsmen.

The lay faculty was not always serious. Joining in their company on weekends and at homecoming, I found them less sophisticated and more given to playful foolishness than the friends we had shared elsewhere. They were hard-drinking except for Emerson, who subscribed to the theory that Christians were meant to drink wine, a more natural drink than whiskey in any of its forms. Once they hit on a whimsical theory, they tended to elaborate on it endlessly, such as one coach's excuse for the basketball team's losing in a night game with Gustavus Adolphus. He declared solemnly that the light reflecting from the hair of so many Scandinavians had blinded his players. One weekend they drove Arleen and me almost to distraction by insisting that Newman's essay on the education of a gentleman must have been intended as a satire. I think that all of them, including Gene, half believed it. On another occasion they upheld their theory that animals could not feel pain by absurd proofs; a piece of steel thrown suddenly on dry ice would emit a sound like a scream but certainly did not feel. It was fun, but it was not conversation.

It comes to me now as something of a shock to realize that they were still in their early twenties—Gene was only twenty-four—younger than many of the leaders in the youth movement today. They shared the common belief of youth that their elders were compromising their ideals and that the old institutions were not working. If Christian renewal was the answer to the problems of the day, they wanted its ideals pursued completely and immediately. Within the framework of this microcosm of university life, Gene and Emerson and some of the younger monks waged battles which, although they were battles in discussion only, were—in the very different idiom of Catholic social philosophy—the battles of the students today.

Emerson approached these disputes as philosophical problems. He had a patient man's tolerance for foibles and contradictions. But they seemed to disturb Gene profoundly. I was glad that he was so alive and engaged, but I sensed that his passionate anti-secularism and his obsessive concern when the monks seemed to fall short of the Benedictine ideal were creating a subtle barrier between us. Often, when we were together, he would hold my hand ab-

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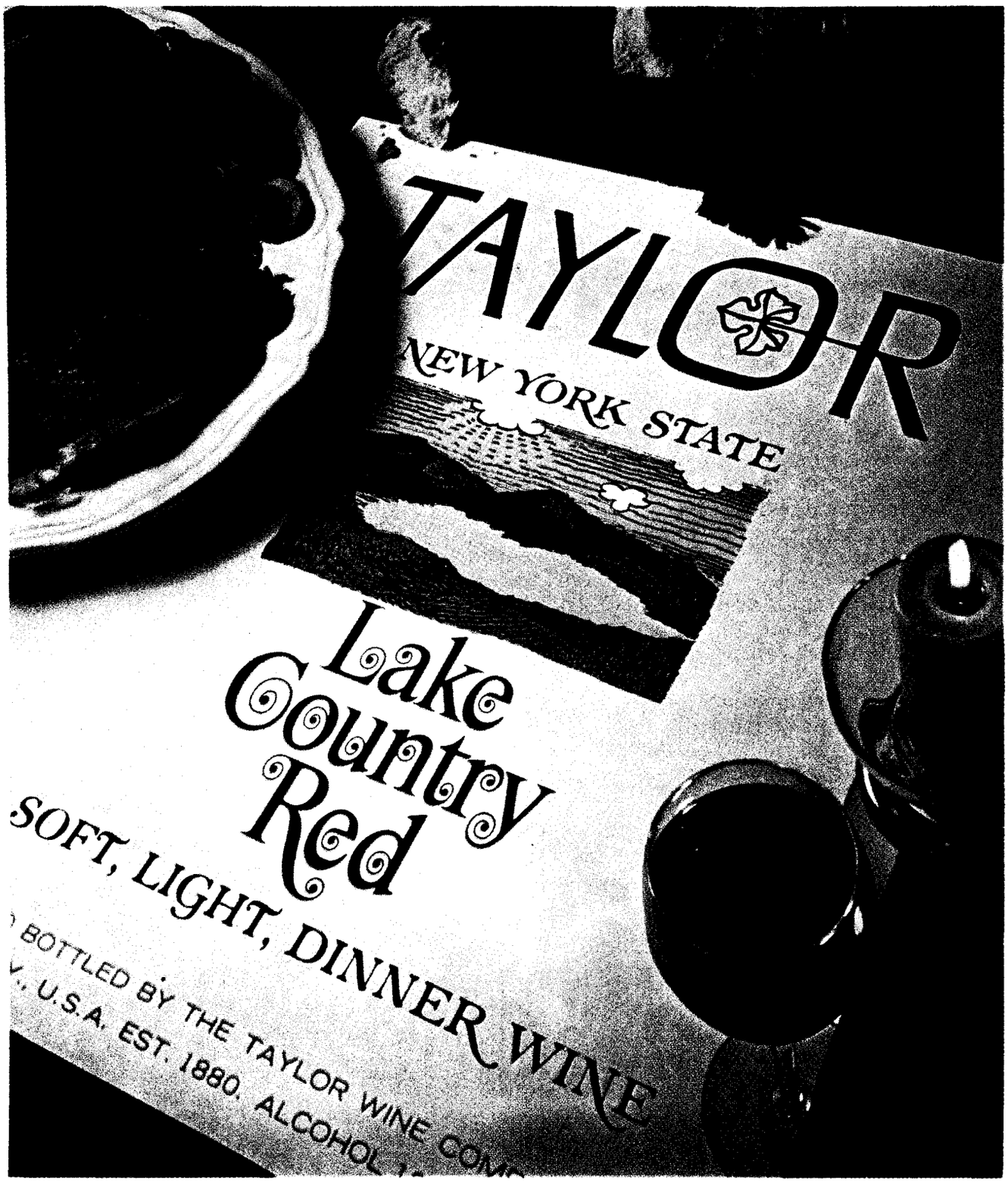

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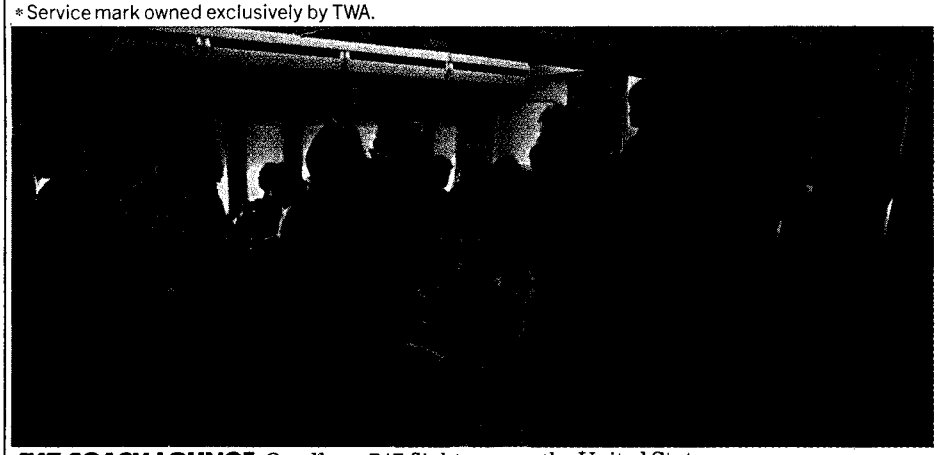

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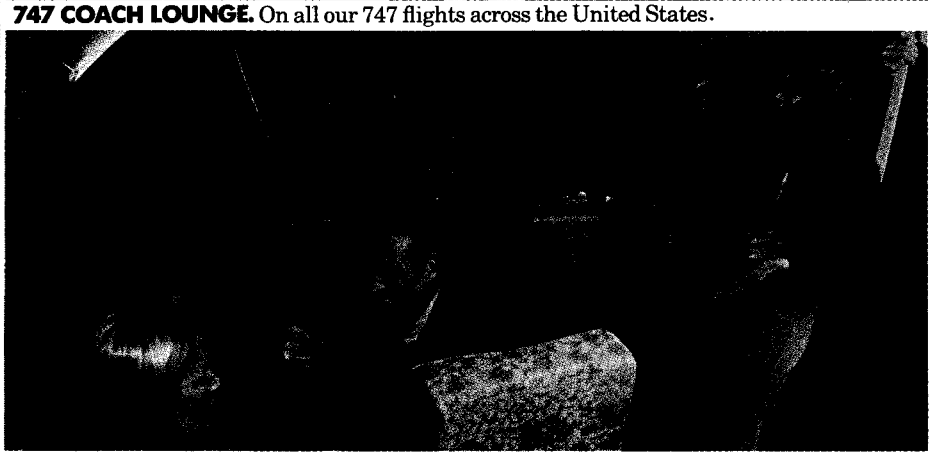

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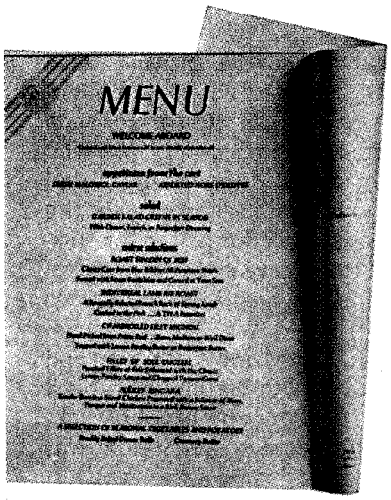

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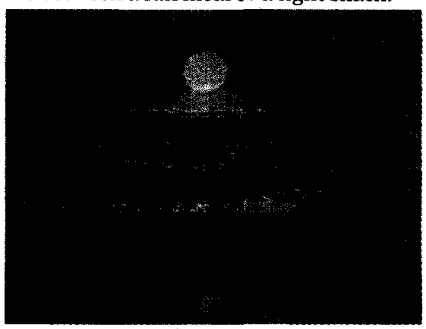

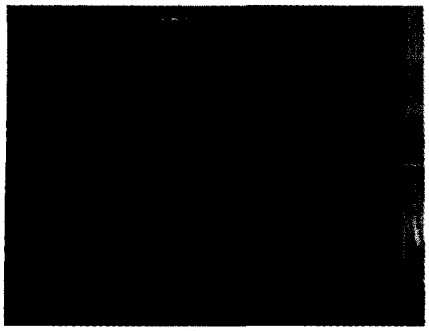

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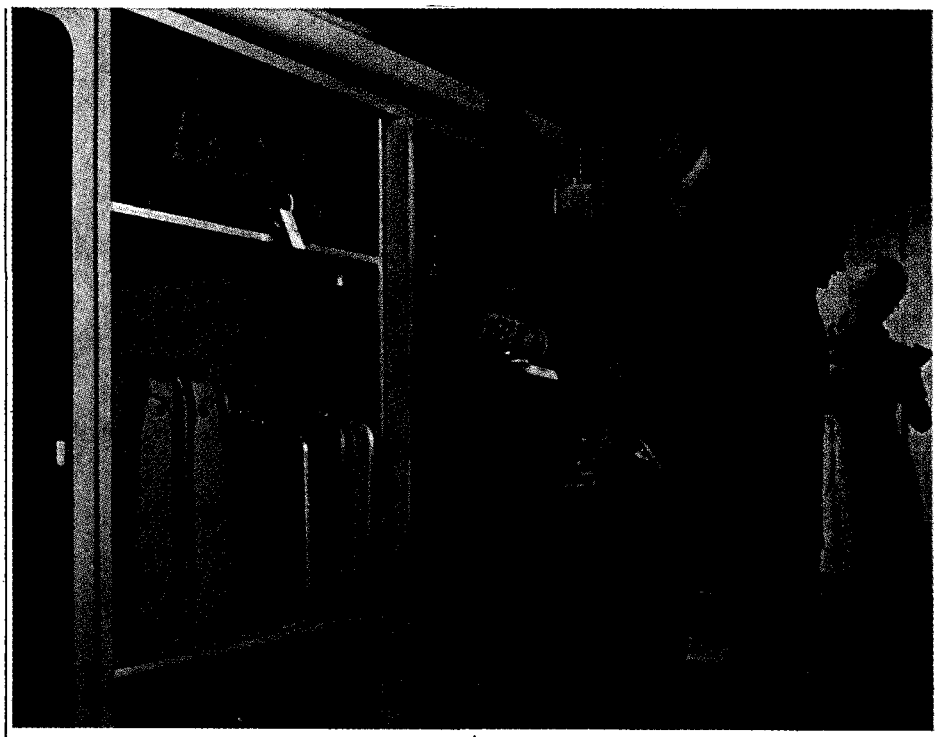

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sently while he ruminated aloud about these things. One of his recurring themes was that, although the monks practiced poverty, chastity, and obedience, Christian asceticism and Christian love for the brotherhood as individuals, they had relinquished all economic and social responsibility to the religious community as a whole and the community was as much a part of the capitalistic system as any other corporate body; that the community acted as employer, property owner, and landlord without any moral sanctions and with reference only to supply and demand. (This same criticism of church bodies has become commonplace today among the faithful in all denominations.) I often felt an outsider, still working and battling in "the world," a victim of the dichotomy set up by integralistic Catholic thinking.

In December of that year I made a change which I thought must surely bring us closer together again. The administration at St. Catherine's knew of our plans for marriage in the approaching summer, so Mother Eucharista, the president, and Sister Antonine, the dean, felt free to ask me to take Sister Maris Stella's classes for the remaining half of the school year so that she could work on a textbook commission set up at Catholic University. The prospect was a delight to me. I was to take over the classes of my most admired college teacher and to guide the destiny of the very successful college magazine, *Ariston*, in her place. Like Gene I would be teaching college classes and sharing the same concerns.

When I returned to St. Catherine's, I found there the same pursuit of academic excellence as in my student years, but also a ferment of ideas. The so-called "Catholic Renaissance" was at its joyful height. To be Catholic no longer meant that one kept one's religion in one mental compartment, one's secular knowledge in another. The Church was being rediscovered. To be a Catholic now meant that one was part of a worldwide community which shared a splendid heritage of arts and letters and in which tremendous intellectual effort was being put into the restructuring of human society to cope with modern evils. It meant that one could claim affinity with the ancient Greek and Roman and Hebraic cultures from which Christianity sprang; it meant that one could identify the universal in the tribal and ethnic cultures to which Christianity had adapted; it meant that one could affirm as Catholic everything true and good.

The Church in America, at least in an important segment of its intellectual leadership, had rediscovered its pre-Puritan past and was no longer to be thought of as at odds with science and the arts. It was the era of conversions: Evelyn Waugh, Robert Lowell, Thomas Merton—so many others. One could think of Christian thought as a dominant and creative influence once again in Western culture. Neo-Scholastic philosophers like Bergson, Gilson, and Maritain were seriously discussed in the most thoughtful journals.

Evelyn Waugh, Graham Greene, Bernanos, Mauriac, Claudel, were in vogue wherever the novel was seriously discussed—and they were ours. Gerard Manley Hopkins was one of the most imitated poets. Sean O'Faolain, Sean O'Casey, Paul Vincent Carroll, and Frank O'Connor were applauded and discussed here. James Joyce was perceived as permanently formed by the Catholicism he rejected. A minor school of the breed known to us as "Catholic authors," as distinguished from authors who merely happened to be Catholic, flourished briefly; perhaps the most distinguished was J. F. Powers, whose short stories brought the near perfection of that most American of forms to the service of what we thought of as truly Catholic themes. The enthusiasm for such writers affected the literature curriculum. We who taught literature were in demand as lecturers and book reviewers. The excitement spread to the alumnae and their friends who formed book discussion groups; some of them founded a critical review called *Books Abounding,* which I edited for two years.

I found my work at St. Catherine's exciting and my continued graduate work stimulating. All this I tried to share with Gene in letters and on our weekend meetings, but he did not seem to take it in. It was as if he were off on a track of his own.

Even harder to cope with emotionally was the sly male ragging that the very mention of St. Catherine's seemed to evoke in the St. John's prefect's room. In part this may have been the old rivalry between the institutions founded by Archbishop Ireland (who had little time for German thought and German ways) and the Benedictine institutions. But I think it was more than that. The monks of St. John's were dedicated men in serious pursuit of holiness. Like most men of the Church they would have denied that they were misogynistic and would have cited their devotion to the Blessed Mother and their own mothers to prove it. But they dealt with the problem of women, as men in groups ever have, by refusing to take them seriously. The attitude was so ingrown, so habitual, that I am sure they did not recognize it for the casual brutality it really was. Thus, when St. Catherine's psychology classes and faculty, earnest and admiring, made a field trip to St. John's to study monasticism, the only report from the prefect's room was that St. Catherine's girls affected a darker, more Joan Crawford-like makeup than those at St. Benedict's, the neighboring women's college. What, they wanted to know, was the reason? When St. Catherine's introduced a course in rural sociology, the hope was expressed that the dignity of farm life would not be considered inseparable from "running water, electricity, tractors,

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and the neighbor's daughter as a maid." The gibes were insignificant in themselves, but it hurt me to have them come from Gene. He had always seemed to me sensitive to women as persons and to their aspirations.

My uneasiness was allayed because his letters were still full of thoughts and hopes I was sure he shared with no one else. At the beginning of Lent he wrote that he was going to limit his time in the prefect's room to an hour a day and spoke of our love for each other as a grace from God. On February 14 he wrote simply, "It is St. Valentine's Day. I love you," and I found at my door a huge box of red roses.

Easter was late that year, but it was still cold and gray and the signs of spring were few when I went to Watkins to spend the Holy Week vacation at the McCarthys' with Gene. After the Good Friday service, Gene and I went driving out into the country. We stopped by a little slough where the willows showed only a pale haze of green. There he told me that he felt called to be a priest after all. He wanted to enter the novitiate at St. John's. With those few words I was bereft of the hope and love which had sustained me and given my life center and purpose. But I could not protest the will of God.

I did not quite see how I could live without him, but I felt a queer sense of relief because the veiled hostility and tension I had sensed in him were gone now that I no longer stood between him and his goal. We fell back almost at once into our old trustful and open exchange of thoughts. "That was why I didn't like G.," Gene said with rare frankness, referring to a teacher friend of mine in Litchfield. "His feelings about you were more honest than mine." And he proposed very tentatively that I might consider entering a convent. There was dark consolation in that thought—that he still wanted me to share his future but in a different way.

Somehow I got through the rest of the weekend. Mrs. McCarthy looked knowing but said nothing until I was leaving. "You are always welcome here, Abbie," she said kindly, and I bore away the bleak knowledge that she, too, like the monks, had known Gene's plans before I did.

Until Gene finally entered the novitiate a year later—he had to save money and prepare himself further in philosophy and Latin—my life was lived on two levels. On one level I continued to be caught up emotionally with him and his plans. We saw each other often—how often, I think his spiritual advisers had no idea. (One night we ran into a prominent St. John's alumnus in a restaurant, and Gene, nervous and surprised, tried to slip by without introducing me. I stormed off in tears.) My friends, too, disapproved because they thought the ambiguity of the relationship too hard on me. I suppose I hoped until the last that he would change his mind.

On the other level I was rebuilding my life. The sisters had rallied to my need. I was to stay on at St. Catherine's teaching part-time until I finished my M.A. In those days an M.A. was much more of a distinction than it is now. The choice of a thesis was a very serious matter, as it was often published, or failing that, became the central core of a doctoral dissertation. Many college teachers never took a higher degree, preferring to grow as classroom teachers rather than to spend several years in the narrow specialization then required for a doctorate.

In my graduate work at the University of Minnesota, I had already been caught up in the rediscovery of the seventeenth century and the Metaphysical poets. The seventeenth was the century in which, as John Donne, its best-known poet said, "a new philosophy called all in doubt." It was a century like our own, in which the implications of recent scientific discoveries were dizzying. It was a century of terrifying doubt and of religious revival; of experimentation in art and poetry.

My first thought was to work on John Donne, but I was advised that he was such a popular subject that it would be difficult to make any original contribution. I had turned to Richard Crashaw—not because I found his baroque and sensuous verse appealing, but because through him I had come to know the great sixteenth-century Spanish mystics, especially Teresa of Avila.

The mystics were regarded with great suspicion by Catholics after the Council of Trent. The popular idea was that they were impractical and given to foolish excesses. The magisterium seemed to consider the mystics dangerous. Student theologians were allowed to read them only under guidance. After all, the mystics belonged to the Augustinian stream of Christianity, and, although St. Augustine had survived his deplorable youth to become one of the fathers of the Church, everyone knew his effect on Luther. Out of favor with both the world and the Church, the mystics' books were hard to find.

A summer school acquaintance of mine had a copy of the *Autobiography of St. Teresa,* smuggled out of some seminary library, and lent it to me. I had read it the first fall I was in Litchfield, totally unprepared for its shattering effect. I knew that one met and experienced God in prayer and in the sacraments, but that there could be this naked, blinding experience of the Divine was frightening. If there was any invitation extended in my discovery of mystical experience, I did not want to accept it. Clearly the price in detachment was more than I wanted to pay.

On Sunday, December 7, Gene was visiting me in a new apartment in St. Paul which I shared with a friend, Edna Fluegel. He went to the little downstairs delicatessen to get something we had forgotten for lunch and came back with the news of Pearl Harbor. For the rest of the day we were close to the radio listening to the flashes and bulletins and interpretations as the story was pieced together. We sat thinking our own thoughts. I could

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not imagine what Gene was thinking. In the spring he had written, "The speeches in the Senate begin to sound like 1918—the same arrogance, presumption, and emotion begin to show." Americans had done nothing to avoid the war or to help end it, he thought, and he suggested that we read the Old Testament to learn how the Hebrews escaped the punishment of war. Like most Midwestern college people, we had been intellectually pacifist, in favor of disarmament, even, perhaps, isolationist. However, in the face of Nazism all this had changed for me. But Gene was set apart now. He was already thinking of what must be taught after the war. He was not to share the experience of his generation—a fact, I think, which set him unusually free later.

Gene came to see me just before he left for the novitiate; I took him to the train for Collegeville for the last time and stood with the tears openly running down my face. "Good God, girl, don't cry," said the conductor, "he's only going sixty miles."

Gene wrote once more before he entered. "I can't do this if it isn't going to be right for you, Abbie," he said. "You must tell me if it isn't." There was nothing I could say, but I was grateful for the letter and happy that he had written it. The next week Arleen Hynes sent me a snapshot she had taken. On the back was written simply "Frater Conan, OSB," Gene's new name. He looked thin and serious but happy in his novice's habit. His hair was cropped short in the novice's tonsure.

I felt bereaved, but in a way, as if I had stepped back into real life out of a story. I took my M.A. that summer.

Every Catholic child is faced with the possibility of a vocation to the priesthood or to the religious life. It is not thought of as a matter of one's own choosing but as a call from God, who may draw you to it irresistibly in a manner of ways, by natural attraction to the life, through another person, through circumstance. But it is a call, echoing through life, to an existence of greater dedication and purpose. Ultimately, to refuse it is to reject Him who has known you before you were begotten, who has called you into being out of illimitable love and for a mysterious purpose. Thomas Merton wrote of his moment of decision, that he was called to answer a question "that had been preparing, not in my mind, but in the infinite depths of an eternal Providence." Although the Church gave lip service to the idea of lay vocation, most Catholics thought of vocation in terms of the priesthood or the convent.

It was a shock to me that good friends could see only regression in Gene's entry into the monastery. They urged me not to follow suit. "What could you ask that is better than that?" asked one of them sadly as he watched me playing with his little boy.

I was even more shocked by the implication of priesthood as an escape; my former landlady Mrs. Rippel, Catholic though she was, was probably speaking from the view of the Middle European peasant. "Well, both our men left us," she said, sighing lugubriously.

I traveled to the West Coast one summer, and then east to study at Bread Loaf, and another year, at the University of Chicago. There were new and interested friendships.

At St. John's Gene was fighting his own battle in the novitiate. Father Basil, the novice master, had made allowances for our former relationship as prospective man and wife and allowed Gene to write to me. This had been a happy surprise to me when I had received the first letter in California. It had seemed so abrupt and unnatural to have any communication between us cut at a stroke; yet I knew it was the norm for those who left the world for religious life. True, these letters supposedly had the aim of counseling me on the problem of my spiritual life and easing the transition to my own vocation, whatever that might be, and could be read by the novice master. After a while Father Basil limited them in number.

It has become something of a cliché in recent books and articles about Gene to speak of his time in the novitiate as time he took out from active life to read and to study. But the novitiate is neither a school nor a place of respite, and Gene did not then look on it as one. The novitiate is a place of testing a vocation. Each particular religious order has a way or spirit of its own. As late as 1968 Gene wrote in an introduction to a book by Abbot Boultwood: "The Benedictine way has never been the way of sudden conversion, but of continuing effort in combining work and prayer without sharp distinction between the secular and the spiritual."

That was the ideal. But the emphasis in the novitiate was very much on the spiritual alone. The new name given the novice signified his death to the world and rebirth in a new family. The life in the novitiate was a rigorous experience of manual labor and spiritual exercises, of work and prayer and learning to live in a community.

Gene's notebooks for the year, duly labeled "Conan, OSB," list the subjects of study and reading, all done under the direction of the novice master. There were notes on assigned reading and on lectures on the spiritual life and on the history of monasticism, with concentration, of course, on the history of Benedictinism. There is a commentary with lecture notes on the Rule of St. Benedict according to which he was beginning to try to live. There were voluminous notes on the Psalms, a necessary preparation for proper participation in the Divine Office which for centuries Benedictines had prayed and recited together every day. There is a course on Mass and the Sacraments, a basic course in the liturgy.

The period of the novitiate lasts for a year. Others who were novices at the same time say that Gene was a very good novice, very observant of the Rule, but

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THE **Atlantic**

1971-1972 Prizes — 51st ANNUAL CREATIVE WRITING CONTESTS

$500 Scholarship awarded to David LaMotte, Phillips Exeter Academy, Exeter, N.H.; Norval Rindfleisch, Instructor

SCHOOLS

Best Fiction — top five

1. Katheryne Snowden — Abbot Academy, Andover, Mass. Jean St. Pierre, instructor. **2.** Bradford Gellert — Phillips Exeter, Exeter, N.H., Norval Rindfleisch. **3.** Bruce Gutter — Marple-Newtown Sr. High School, Newtown Square, Pa.; Nancy C. Thomas. **4.** Wendy Haas — Wantagh High School, Wantagh, N.Y. Joan Rosen. **5.** Dale Head — Rincon High School, Tucson, Arizona; Jean Christison

Best Non-fiction — top five

1. Douglas Wald — Phillips Exeter Academy, Exeter, N.H.; David Weber, instructor. **2.** Ellen Shortell — Belmont High School, Belmont, Mass.; Patricia Khoury. **3.** Susan Moore — Orange High School, Cleveland, Ohio; Rose S. Barth. **4.** Clare Inlow — Dennis J. O'Connell High School, Arlington, Va.; Sr. Michel Marie. **5.** Meryl Siegman — The Chapin School, New York, N.Y.; Judith Phelps

Best Poetry — top five

1. Helen Kallas — Roycemore School, Evanston, Ill. Edith C. Eisner, instructor. **2.** Cynthia Baughman — National Cathedral School, Washington, D.C. Gabrielle Joye Pregnall. **3.** David LaMotte — Phillips Exeter Academy, Exeter, N.H.; Norval Rindfleisch. **4.** Bill Chance — Phillips Exeter, Exeter, N.H.; B. Rodney Marriott. **5.** Rosalie Jaffe — George W. Hewlett High, Hewlett, N.Y.; Ruth Nelson

School Fiction — honorable mention

Meryl Seigman — The Chapin School, New York, New York; Helen Kallas — Roycemore School, Evanston, Illinois; Nick Lazor — Kenmore High School, Akron, Ohio; June Robertson — Seaway District High School, Iroquois, Ontario, Canada; Wayne Thompson — Kubasaki High School, APO San Francisco, California; Fred Kaplan — Hutchinson High School, Hutchinson, Kansas; Jane Sherwin — Evanston Township High School, Evanston, Illinois; Tom Malsch — Beloit Memorial High School, Beloit, Wisconsin; Daniel Guenther — Heelan High School, Sioux City, Iowa; William C. Campbell — Phillips Exeter Academy, Exeter, New Hampshire; Jonathan Wiener — Phillips Exeter, Exeter, New Hampshire; Jack Foley — Phillips Exeter, Exeter, New Hampshire; Richard Spalding — Phillips Exeter, Exeter, New Hampshire; Mariana Simmons — Conestoga Sr. High School, Berwyn, Pennsylvania; Frank Symington — Conestoga Sr. High School, Berwyn, Pennsylvania

School Non-fiction — honorable mention

Ruth Wiener — Clairemont High School, San Diego, Cal; Jess Ishikawa — Beloit Memorial High School, Beloit, Wisconsin Karin Wyman — Ethel Walker School, Simsbury, Ct.; Steven Miller — William Allen High School, Allentown, Pa.; Janet Loughridge — Orange High School, Cleveland, Ohio; Elizabeth Corn — Orange High School, Cleveland, Ohio; Gael Sweeney — Orange High School, Cleveland, Ohio; Mary Wallach — Orange High School, Cleveland, Ohio; Stuart Huston — Orange High School, Cleveland, Ohio; K. Brewer Doran — The Kimberley School, Montclair, New Jersey; Fred Kaplan — Hutchinson High School, Hutchinson, Ks.; Jamie Broderick — Phillips Exeter, Exeter, N.H.; Paul Hill — Bsp. Dennis J. O'Connell High School, Arlington, Va.; Donna Nelson — Brockton High School, Brockton, Mass.; Susan Cayleff — Brockton High School, Brockton, Mass.

School poetry — honorable mention

Peter Fish — Ventura High School, Ventura, Cal.; Richard Dingman — South Torrance High School, Torrance, Cal.; Catherine Bauelas — Castilleja School for Girls, Palo Alto, Cal.; Donna Collins — Villa Maria Academy, Malvern, Pa.; Trevor Vonk — Palo Alto Sr. High, Palo Alto, Cal.; Michael Turano — Pius XI High School, Milwaukee, Wis.; Judy Graham — Evanston Twsp. High School, Evanston, Ill.; Connie Dyste — South Torrance High School, Torrance, Cal.; Jenni Rogers — Tigard Sr. High School, Tigard, Oregon; Jacqui McEwen — Marple-Newtown Sr. High School, Newtown Square, Pa.; James Kuslan — Hamden High School, Hamden, Ct.; Steven Vetter — Conestoga Sr. High School, Berwyn, Pa.; Thomas De Pietro — Fordham Preparatory School, Bronx, N.Y.; Robert O'Hare — Ramona High School, Riverside, Cal.; Martha Gamble — Lee High School, Montgomery, Alabama

COLLEGES

Best Fiction — top five

1. Dawn Schnarr — Academy of the New Church College, Bryn Athyn, Pa.; Richard Gladish, inst. **2.** Louise Junge — Academy of the New Church College, Bryn Athyn, Pa.; Richard Gladish. **3.** John Wilson — University of Houston, Houston, Texas; S.N. Karchmer. **4.** Carolyn Johnson — University of Houston, Houston, Tx.; S.N. Karchmer. **5.** Chris Anderson — Youngstown State University, Youngstown, Ohio; William C. Baker

Best Non-Fiction — top five

1. Dennis R. Stuter — Mansfield State College, Mansfield, Pa.; David Bellamy, instructor. **2.** Paul Hamer — Wheaton College, Wheaton, Ill.; Helen Siml de Vette. **3.** Michael Zimecki — University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pa.; Margery E. Gulbransen. **4.** Christopher T. George — College of Notre Dame of Md., Baltimore, Md.; Sr. Maura, SSND. **5.** James O'Brien — University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Va.; John C. Coleman

Best Poetry — top five

1. Dennis Ray — University of Houston, Houston, Texas; James Cleghorn, instructor. **2.** Joyce Latham — College of Notre Dame of Maryland, Baltimore, Md.; Sr. Maura SSND. **3.** Mary Susan Golden — Rosary College, River Forest, Ill.; Sr. Mary Jeremy. **4.** Alan Y. Droz — Wayne State University, Detroit, Mich.; Julie Thopson Klein. **5.** Shawn McLaughlin — College of Notre Dame of Md., Baltimore, Md.; Sr. Ruth Miriam, SSND.

College Fiction — honorable mention

Alan Y. Droz — Wayne State University, Detroit, Mich.; Sr. Mary Christine McNamara, SSL — Mt. St. Mary's College, Los Angeles, Calif.; Angela Kucia — Mt. St. Mary's College, Los Angeles, Calif; Neda Riley — University of Evansville, Evansville, Ind.; Jonnie J. Wallis — University of Evansville, Evansville, Ind.; Lynne Horigan — Academy of the New Church College, Bryn Athyn, Pa.; Stephen Morley — Academy of the New Church College, Bryn Athyn, Pa.; Yvonne Alden — Academy of the New Church College, Bryn Athyn, Pa.; Carla Glebe — Academy of the New Church College, Bryn Athyn, Pa.; David Childs — Academy of the New Church College, Bryn Athyn, Pa.; Caroll Gardner — University of Evansville, Evansville, Indiana; Mary Claridge — University of Evansville, Evansville, Ind.; Gary Reichelderfer — University of Houston, Houston, Texas; Yvonne Bialik — Muskegon Community College, Muskegon, Mich.; Gayle Privatt — Mt. Mary College, Milwaukee, Wis.; Larry McGurn — Donnelly College, Kansas City, Kansas.

College Non-Fiction — honorable mention

Lawrence Zwier — Aquinas College, Grand Rapids, Mich.; Jerry Selleck — Muskegon Community College, Muskegon, Mich.; Nancy Dempsey — University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pa.; Andrea Ferguson — University of Evansville, Evansville, Indiana; Barry Field — Academy of the New Church College, Bryn Athyn, Penna; Louise Junge — Academy of the New Church College, Bryn Athyn, Pa.; John C. Reynolds — University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pa.; Teresa M. Kadunce — University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pa.; Lorraine Caliendo — Rosary College, River Forest, Ill.; Janis Berg — Rosary College, River Forest, Ill.; Timothy Neumann — Wheaton College, Wheaton, Ill.; Matthew Huff — Wheaton College, Wheaton, Ill.; Constance Penney — Wheaton College, Wheaton, Ill.; Franni Lewis — Wheaton College, Wheaton, Ill.; Daniel E. Miller — Mansfield State College, Mansfield, Penna.

College Poetry — honorable Mention

Sr. Mary Christine McNamara, SSL — Mt. St. Mary's College, Los Angeles, Cal.; Estill Pollock — Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond, Ky.; Joan Marie Ellis — College of Notre Dame of Md., Baltimore, Md.; Stephen Kent Erickson — Wheaton College, Wheaton, Ill.; Constance Penney — Wheaton College, Wheaton, Ill.; Mary Pat Parten — Mt. St. Mary's College, Los Angeles, Cal.; Catherine Stearns — Beloit College, Beloit, Wisconsin; Christopher T. George — College of Notre Dame of Md., Baltimore, Md.; Irene Callis — University of Evansville, Evansville, Indiana; Laura Mazza — College of Notre Dame of Md., Baltimore, Md.; Thomas R. Thornton — College of Notre Dame of Md., Baltimore, Md.; Angela Douglas — Fontbonne College, St. Louis, Mo.; Georgia Gribbin — University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pa.; John Schwennessen — Eastern Washington State College, Cheney, Wash.; Beth Froelinger — College of Notre Dame of Md., Baltimore, Md.

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that the novice master found him difficult. According to one of them, Gene read all of the back copies of *Orate Fratres,* the organ of the liturgical movement, using them as a starting point for meditation, and was constantly reprimanded by the master for reading for intellectual pleasure rather than for spiritual profit. Father Basil took his responsibility to test the vocations of those under his charge very seriously. He was somewhat suspicious of novices with superior ability and education. At the end of the year it was his duty to recommend to the older monks of the monastery—the Chapter—the acceptance of the novices who had persisted in their vocation and been found worthy. If the Chapter accepted them they became Benedictine clerics studying for the priesthood.

Gene never explained exactly why he left St. John's, but he did tell me once years later that the novice master had not wanted to recommend him because he thought him guilty of intellectual pride. It was true that the novice master had often accused him of it before other novices, but his confreres insist that he could not have been seriously rejected, that he would surely have been approved by the Chapter. However, he left before the time of appearance before the Chapter and went that summer to St. Francis Seminary in Milwaukee, a seminary for secular priests, that is, priests who do not belong to a religious order.

All through that year, Gene must have labored with his feeling for and responsibility to me. He sought out in his reading quotations and information about the great spiritual friendships which are so much a part of Catholic history. His meditation notes were studded with these quotations:

"Love desires all that is good for the beloved. . . . Lovers look not at each other but at the same goal." (Gibran) "The love of man and woman is a crack which admits the love of God." (Mauriac) "Each is an aid to the other in advancing in the love of God, even to the point where they must separate. . . . So those who love each other must remain concerned over the salvation of each other as long as they live. I will remember you after I have forgotten myself, to fix myself to the cross more firmly." (St. Francis de Sales to St. Jeanne de Chantal) From a note on Montalambert—perhaps the most telling quotation of all—"In the history of most saints who have exercised a *reformatory* [italics mine] influence on monasteries the name and influence of a holy woman is found. Basil and Macrine. Augustine and Monica. Benedict and Scholastica. Clare and Francis. Francis de Sales and Jeanne de Chantal." And from Abbot Marmion, "One gives up last what he loves best, or better than self."

When he wrote to me, he wrote asking me to consider becoming a Benedictine. The reasons he gave were historical. Over the centuries they had adapted best; their rule was most human; and they had been centers of renewal whenever Western civilization floundered.

For it was not the Benedictines as they were that Gene felt called to, but the Benedictines as he thought they should be, although he tried to muffle that thought in his letters from the novitiate where he was supposed to be learning to set aside his own judgment. He had written the year before that although he still tended to think the Church was right in Spain—one of our few points of difference—he knew now that there was too little thought about what had brought about revolution in the first place: "The monks were in the monasteries, and the secular clergy in the parish houses—no regard for the temporal need of the people." He had thought, too, that the renewed emphasis on teaching the humanities in Catholic colleges was our excuse for avoiding political, social, and economic questions which require positive action and personal sacrifice.

Within Benedictinism there were many possibilities. Before his entrance, Gene's advisers must surely have discussed with him the way in which truly exceptional intellectual gifts could best be put at the service of God and the order. He told me of the Benedictines' plan to establish small priories in state university communities—something the Dominicans had done very effectively—where classes could be taught and where scholars could act as a magnet in the university community for true philosophy and theology. There was in his concern about what he considered false teaching much of the reformer's love, which, as Virginia Woolf once said, has so much hatred mixed into it. He read the poetry of Robert Lowell, at that time considered a Catholic poet, and reread Robert Frost. He made notes on some of the poems and a sketchy consideration, perhaps for a talk on teaching, of the comparison between teachers and poets. A teacher must give something of himself, he noted, in a way lay bare his soul as a writer does, especially a poet (Gene was always in his own teaching to find this necessity a stumbling block). He felt called to *do* something rather than to *be* something. His vocation was a restless river seeking a channel.

His novitiate notes on St. Benedict's Twelve Degrees of Humility show that he struggled to the end with the problem of what intellectual pride might be. Years later he was to write in the notes for one of his books this comment: "Intellectual pride—always a contradiction—demanding rejection of the one distinctly human faculty—reason or knowledge—understanding."

He was instinctively feeling a healthy reaction to the false spirituality which attempted to divide a man's spiritual growth from the total development of his gifts and talents. And the failure to realize that an intellectual's weakness often lies in his own all too keen awareness of his deficiencies, rather than the opposite. In the revival of spiritual direction which in the 1950s and 1960s began to use the insights of

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modern psychology, the tendency to glorify mediocrity and conformity was pinpointed for what it really was.

I was at the University of Chicago in that summer of 1943, and Gene came to see me a few times. I met him at the railroad station and we spent the days wandering about Chicago, eating our lunch in the sunshine in Grant Park. I think I shied away from the struggle he was going through.

It was not that my own search for vocation had not been serious; I had accepted Gene's suggestion that I enter a convent as a sign from God, since obviously our lives were meant to be intertwined. The spiritual friendships and the dual vocations cited in Gene's notes were familiar to anyone who had considered the spiritual life very seriously. And there were even more modern examples of married couples who had left each other to pursue lives of individual holiness. (The Church only gives permission for such a separation if both parties will accept the religious life.)

I loved the nuns I knew—strictly speaking, as teaching sisters, uncloistered, they were not nuns. All my school life they had been to me quite literally "other mothers" and good friends. The accidentals of religious life did not repel me. I liked the local color of convent life, the in jokes, the variety of habits, the familiar smell of starched linen and waxed floors in convents. When I was a junior in college one of my best friends, now president of St. Catherine's, stunned us by entering the convent during spring vacation without a word to any of us. There was innocent drama in her reappearance among us as a student postulant in the black, caped postulant dress, guarded from contact with us by older postulants—but I was wildly saddened by it and cried uncontrollably in bed at night. I cried, I think, not so much for her as for myself: I was afraid that I might have a vocation, too. And I had wanted more than anything else in life a warm personal love, a home and babies of my own. I had dreamed of the completion of finding one person among all others who would understand and love me, and whose life and hopes would become my own—of some one both friend and lover.

When I dutifully studied various modes of religious life, I found myself pulled two ways: to the traditional orders I knew and to new forms of service. I was attracted by the comparative freedom and the newness of spirit in new kinds of vocations which had come into being as responses to twentieth-century problems. In the first sad summer away from Gene, I had read in *Time* of the coming to America of a new kind of nun, Dutch women who were the dedicated core of a women's movement. They were called the Ladies of the Grail. They did not wear habits, did not necessarily live in community, moved freely about, and were not interested in the traditional women's roles of teaching and nursing. The little I read about them, with their promise of challenge and freedom, interested me very much. I wanted to explore that avenue. In Minneapolis I had taken up volunteer work with the Catholic Worker House, badly understaffed as the men were drafted or went off to conscientious objector camps. I liked the sense of the Worker community, which then stretched from coast to coast. I wrote the newsletter for them and took an active part in the discussion meetings, although I could not quite reconcile myself to Dorothy Day's unyielding pacifism. There were times when it seemed to me that the Worker was the answer to Christ's call to serve the poor.

When I last saw Gene that summer of 1943 he had told me that he could not go on at the seminary and that he had been accepted at another Benedictine monastery, St. Bede's in Illinois. When he suddenly appeared in Minneapolis that fall, having abandoned the idea of a priestly vocation, I felt drained. He talked tentatively of ways we might be together, ways based on his seminary reading. For the first and only time in our relationship I deceived him; I suggested that he should consult his cousin, Father Louis McCarthy, a professor at St. Paul Seminary, who had acted as my friend and confessor in those difficult years. When he was on his way, I called Father Louis. "You must help him, Father," I said. "I don't know what to do. I am too tired emotionally. I don't understand what he wants and needs."

When Gene returned that evening he said that Father had been very helpful. "He knows a great deal about women," he added cryptically. "He thinks we should not talk about any plans just yet." I demurred, pleading emotional exhaustion, and we soon fell quite naturally into the easy and natural close and undemanding friendship we had shared in the two years he had been preparing for the monastery.

He went through the ordeal of reporting for the draft and being rejected on physical grounds. (He suffered in those years from a severe bursitis which left him with a limp that is noticeable even now when he is tired.) Then he started an uneasy job search. He considered going to the West Coast with his brother, Austin, who was reporting for Navy duty. "I have been *here* too long now," he had written significantly from Watkins. To leave the seminary was thought scandalous then, and his position must have been painful in Watkins. A teachers' college job fell through. He suspected that the recommendation from St. John's had been "too specific" about his reason for leaving there. At Sunday supper gatherings in my apartment he renewed ties with our old friends and met some new ones, all of whom tried to be helpful. In the end, his government applications, updated, bore fruit. He was recruited for Army Intelligence and left for Washington, D.C. His letters sounded lonely, but he had a flair for cryptoanalysis. At the end of the war he bought a farm at Watkins and asked me to come there with him. We were married on June 25, 1945. □

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LIFE & LETTERS

PROVIDE, PROVIDE!

by Elizabeth Janeway

THE COMING OF AGE
by Simone de Beauvoir
Putnam's, $10.00

Simone de Beauvoir's study of old age was published in France as *La Vieillesse,* and in England under an exact translation: *Old Age.* How amused Mlle. de Beauvoir must be to find her suspicions of America's hypocritical readers confirmed by the name bestowed on her book here: *The Coming of Age!* As far as the title goes, her five hundred and seventy-two pages (plus index) might be addressed to those members of the younger generation who face, or have recently passed, their twenty-first birthday. The change neatly underlines her point: no one, not even the aged themselves, *really* wants to hear or think about the grim last days of life, narrowing down to the grave; when, as Robert Frost reminded us in the poem whose title I have borrowed, the "beauty Abishag, the picture pride of Hollywood," has become the withered hag who comes with rag and pail to wash the steps.

It is one of Mlle. de Beauvoir's strengths that she does not wince away from the unpleasant. Nor—another strength—does she wallow in it. She is, above all else, a just judge of the great issues of life, at once compassionate and objective. Her sympathies are engaged by the old, but so is her mind, and it is a powerful mind; best, I have always thought, when grappling with issues of a profound moral nature. Here she is discussing the treatment and the image, including the self-image, of the old imposed by society; but the purpose of her book is to examine society as it is revealed by treatment and image, not simply to describe and deplore the valuation set on the aged.

So this is (as was *The Second Sex*) a book about power; for any examination of how society works must come down to Lenin's question, Who does what to whom? (How one regrets the succinct Russian, *"Kto kovo?"* which fits so well into Mlle. de Beauvoir's opposing categories of "subject" and "object.") What society does to the old is to label them "objects." They lose their freedom of action and with it, their dignity. In her introduction, Mlle. de Beauvoir quotes Grimm's chilling tale about the peasant who makes his old father eat out of a small wooden trough, apart from the rest of the family. One day he finds his son fitting little boards together. "It's for you when you're old," says the child.

The tension between generations has always existed. The young challenge the old, the old fear the young's attack. But when we say this, we are blurring an important distinction. To the young, the older generations blend together: "Don't trust anyone over thirty." But the grandfathers differ from the fathers, the really aged from the mature who hold the power of action and control. When we talk of old age we are almost always talking of those who have passed beyond the wielding of power. But, as Mlle. de Beauvoir makes clear, citing examples from anthropology and from history, the attitudes of younger adults toward the aged have always been founded earlier. The memory of past power provokes a present urge of revenge or mockery. The adult generation remembers the power of its fathers and so, as that power wanes, the adults react. Treatment of the aged by adults reflects the treatment of yesterday's children by yesterday's parents.

Such treatment is deeply affected by economic possibilities and by social norms. "I have come across only one [ethnological example]," writes Mlle. de Beauvoir, "in which happy children turn into adults who are cruel to their fathers and mothers—the Ojibway. Whereas the Yakut and the Ainu, who are badly treated as children, neglect the old most brutally, the Yaghan and Aleut, who live in almost the same conditions but among whom the child is king, honor their old people. Yet the aged," she pauses to remind us, "are often the victims of a vicious circle: extreme poverty obliges the adults to feed their children badly and to neglect them." How much freedom and respect the powerful can allow the weak, then, is dependent on what is available for all. We need not be surprised to discover that the most hard-pressed communities practice both infanticide and the abandonment of the old. One provides for the future or remembers the past only after one has eaten today.

Against such threats, of course, the old have their weapons. The first is memory. In a stable society, experi-

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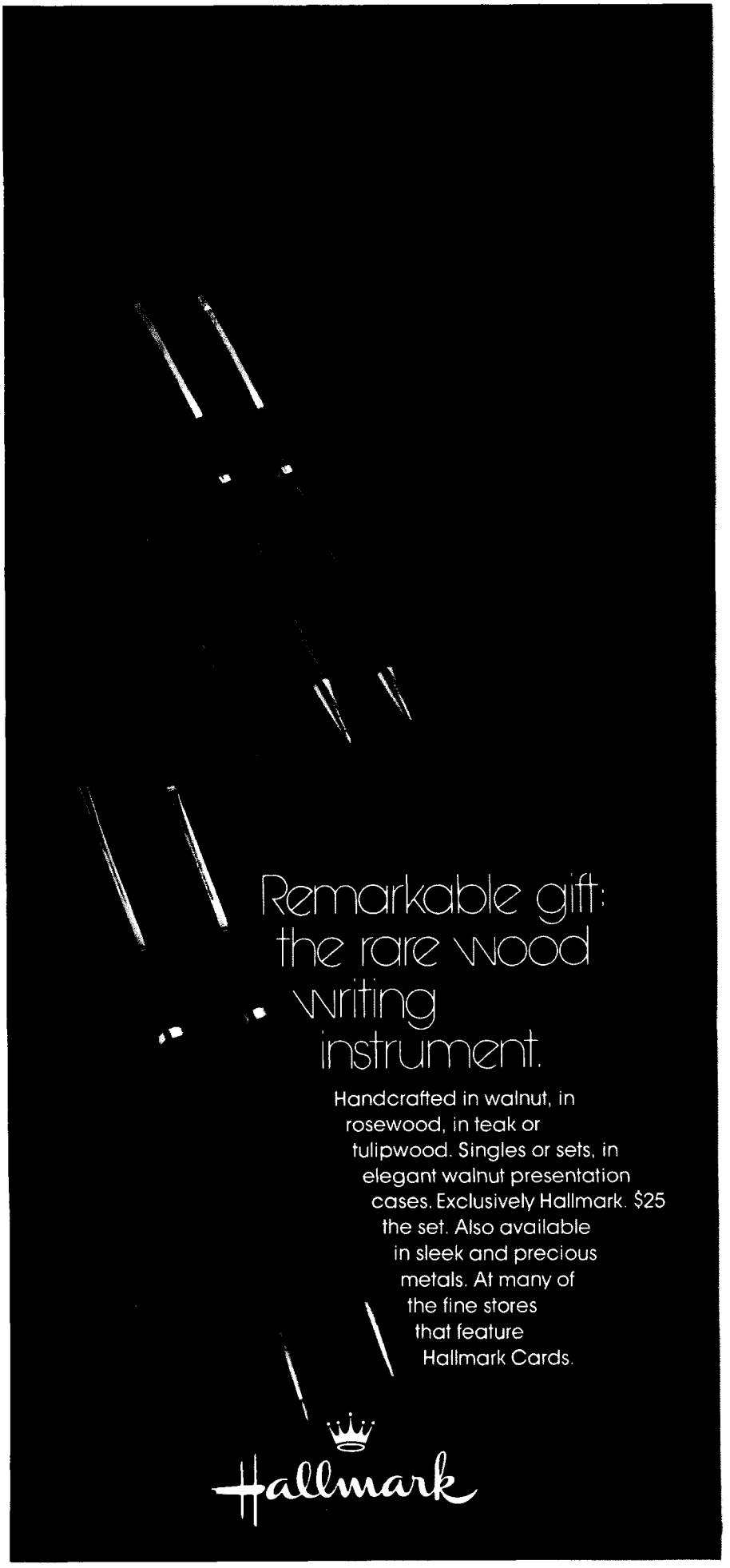
ence increases useful knowledge. The old know the patterns of the weather, the movements of animals, and the skills of husbandry. Besides, stable societies tend to respect traditions and these the old know too and can expound. Another weapon is magic. Tradition often blends into "knowledge" of how to control the supernatural. But, more than that, the old can be seen as prenatal ghosts. If death is no more than a rite of passage and the reborn old man returns to haunt his former home, it will be *his* turn to take revenge on those who mistreated him. Certainly rites for the dead around the world emphasize the need to propitiate the ghost, to feed him well and speed him on his way, lest he linger close at hand, for if he lingers, it will only be with malicious intent. Who listens for a loving ghost?

When literacy appears, memory loses much of its value. Fear of the supernatural comes and goes. But the third weapon of the old has never lost its weight: property. Die early and avoid the fate of the ruined beauty, Abishag, Frost advises his readers,

> Or if predestined to die late,
> Make up your mind to die in state.
>
> Make the whole stock exchange your own!
> If need be occupy a throne. . . .

In short, since this is a question of power, hold on to what you have of it. "Boughten friendship" will not save you from mockery and hate, but it will protect you from their effects, at least from their immediate effects.

The powerful, stubborn, hardfisted old, the frustrated, ambitious, resentful young—this confrontation has passed into the deepest reaches of our social awareness. These figures are part of the furniture of our minds: Fedor Karamazov, Lyndon Johnson, Chaucer's old January with his bought bride, May, Pétain challenged by De Gaulle, who later suffered a similar challenge, the old generals of the First War and the young poets in the trenches, the marching students of Paris in May, 1968, the impudent lovers of Congreve and Molière who conspire against their miserly parents, we know them all. They speak to us with a double authority, that of fact and that of myth. Hostility between generations confirms the prophecy each angry child makes to himself of the revenge he will take when his time comes. And then—



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June Report on

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"An upright, God-fearing man, not dainty about food or drink, robust and alert, with good sea legs"—so Samuel de Champlain described "the Good Captain" of his ship, but he might have been summing up his own character. No mean sailor himself, SAMUEL ELIOT MORISON is the one man best qualified to write the life of "one of the greatest pioneers, explorers and colonists of all time."

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SAMUEL DE CHAMPLAIN: FATHER OF NEW FRANCE

by Samuel Eliot Morison

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LITTLE, BROWN

And then, even for the powerful, power passes again. What does it feel like inside, to be old when one was young, weak when one was strong? The second part of Mlle. de Beauvoir's book explores the interior world whose existence the first part has documented. Like the very rich, in Fitzgerald's well-known aperçu, the old are different from you and, maybe, me. How? and how do they perceive this difference?

In the external world, old people become objects instead of agents. Heretofore I have spoken of the wielders of power, but really this is a very small percentage of adult human beings. The poor and subordinate have always been objects, moved about by economic forces and social demands. But because they have participated in the work of the world, most of them have had the illusion that they have some control over their actions. They imagine a future; though, as psychologists have shown, the ability to plan for a future is closely tied to economic and sexual status. Women, subordinates, and the poor tend to live in the present. The coming of old age closes off the future to all. For the powerful, this is a stunning and disheartening shock. For the powerless, says Mlle. de Beauvoir, it is an equally stunning revelation of betrayal. Is this all? they are left to ask of their past lives, their *whole* lives. In today's industrial society, their hard-won skills are useless, their memories are irrelevant, ties with home and kin have withered or broken, customs have changed or vanished, ahead lie isolation, disregard, and a death among strangers. Was it for this they lived out the busy years? The devalued present calls the past into question, and the answer is mocking.

In the interior world inside each graying head there is an equally unsettling confrontation. One's old identity is somehow no longer acceptable on public exchange. One may feel nineteen or thirty-one or no age at all, but those out there get up and offer a seat on the bus, listen for a moment, laugh and go on talking, or don't listen at all. One is faced with the task—if one wants to keep in touch with reality—of remaking one's sense of oneself; and remaking it downwards, to incorporate that unflattering figure seen in the eyes of those others, the young and the powerful. One lives between lies—the inner feeling of youth, the outer judgment of age, which is true? To accept the outer judgment, one must be false to oneself; falseness, then, can spread to all one feels or knows. "Old age," writes Mlle. de Beauvoir, "is life's parody." Again, her documentation of this bitter conclusion has compelling weight.

I must speak of one omission which is understandable, though, I think, mistaken. But first I want to praise the insight, the candor, the subtle vision, and the unflinching objectivity of this whole enterprise. Reading this book took on the aspect of conducting an interior orchestra. I found myself leaping up again and again to leaf through Yeats, or Susanne Langer's analysis of the comic and tragic modes of drama in *Feeling and Form,* to reread Erik Erikson's vision of the last crisis of life as one moves from maturity to age, or Victor Turner's brilliant analysis of rites of passage in *The Ritual Process,* to recall a dozen more examples of my own touchstones of validity in human experience. Far from being depressing, *The Coming of Age* is a life-giving book. Published passages devoted to the sexual activities of the old are almost vulgarly misleading: in the book they illuminate the connection between vitality, creativity, and libido with considerable force, and indicate the effect on personal life of societal status, roles, and role-reversals. One can't abstract from a book like this without diminishing what is selected, for, by so doing, one cuts connections. Any whole is greater than the sum of its parts, and this is a noble whole. The life of the poor, the life of the mind, the triumphs and the failures of statesmen, the trials of artists, writers, and composers, myth, legend, and drama, absurdity, despair, dedication, and joy are woven together so that the many vivid examples and quotations that Mlle. de Beauvoir uses light up the conclusions she draws and keep them from seeming doctrinaire or insistent. Pedantic? Well, yes. She's a little pedantic. In her, it becomes a virtue. She supplies a baker's dozen of facts, she provides exhaustive analyses. Astonishingly, they are always interesting.

Then, what is missing? Something I would not have looked for myself until, toward the end of the book, I began to be aware, from a sentence or two of Mlle. de Beauvoir's, that she

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had excluded it from consideration: religion. Perhaps she is right, for considering religion without debating it as sacred truth may be more disruptive of reasoned argument than not considering it at all. But I would like to suggest that what religion *does* (leaving aside what it *is*—that is, true or not true) is posit an alternative reality to that figured forth in our daily lives. She speaks of the deadening effect on the old of having the *idea* of a future removed, of there being no more room in which to project plans or imagine action. Again, she remarks on the way in which the reality of old age shows up the assumed reality of earlier life and reveals it as a cheat. "The promises have been kept," she quotes herself from an earlier book, *La force des choses,* and ends, "I have been swindled."

Now, what religion tells us is that everyday reality is indeed untrue and in-valid—a swindle—unless it is invaded and transfigured by the sacred. Can we believe this ambivalent statement? Such a question can only be argued, never decided. It will and has been *used,* taken as a directive to put up with everyday life and its horrors because they are false and will be wiped away in a better world. Alas, that does not dispose of the proposition that there may be a better world. And if one is caught in falsity, as the old are caught between "self" and "image," faith in another reality offers an alternative framework of value to which the self may be attached. But how can one ask questions like these without their seeming to be pious banalities inviting a like response? Can one ask them at all unless one asks sincerely (that is, without judging), and does this not imply one's own belief? The anthropologist can question believers in other faiths on the psychological aspects of their systems, for he is a stranger. Can a fellow member of Western society approach believers in the same way? Will his presence not, in itself, disturb the experimental equilibrium? At any rate, understandably, they are not asked.

But the problem is heightened by the fact that those old who seem to manage best (as cited here) often appear to make a connection with a reality outside that of ordinary life. Religion is not always a comfort. Victor Hugo kept his faith to the end, along with an abiding interest in

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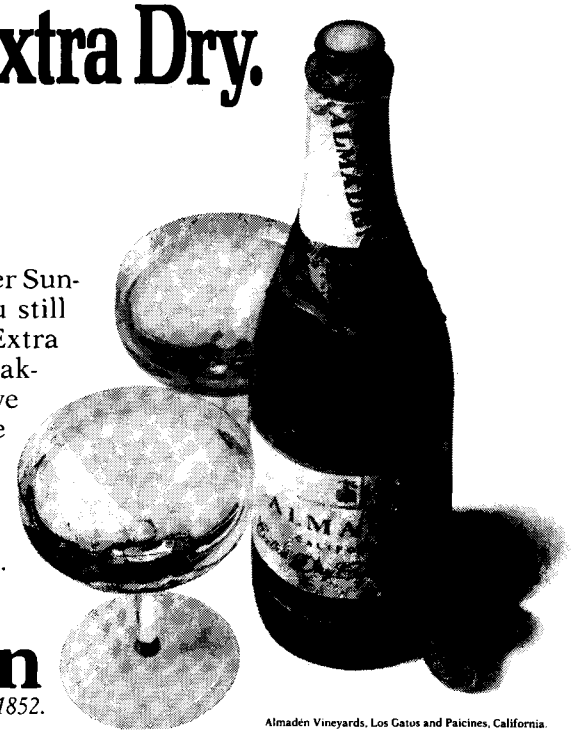

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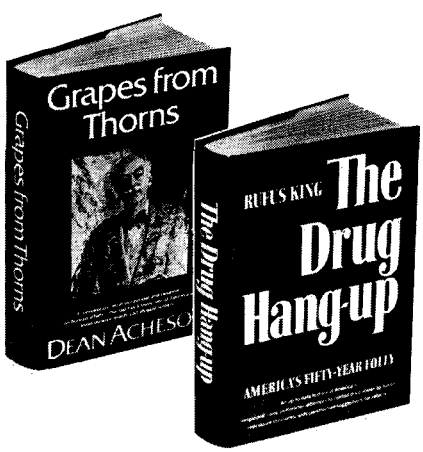

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young girls. To a friend he said, "I am old; I am going to die. I shall see God . . . Talk to him! What a tremendous event! What shall I say to him?" He never wondered, Mlle. de Beauvoir notes acerbly, what God might say to *him.* Michelangelo, retaining his faith and losing his skill with advanced age, felt that God was reproving him for wasting his time on art instead of worship. Other artists have been sustained by joy in their continuing power to create: their connection, that is, with the "other reality" of art, Yeats's "artifice of eternity." Mlle. de Beauvoir's own advice is "to go on pursuing ends that give our existence a meaning," which she then sums up rather anticlimactically as "devotion to individuals, to groups or to causes, social, political, intellectual or creative work."

In the end, I suppose, one can only accept that other being, the aged image in another's eyes, as oneself if there is somehow room in one's self to take the creature in. Of all the teeming examples in this bountiful book of such a confrontation, the most useful for our shaken and frightened age seems to me an anecdote about the aged Goya, who had lived through terror, revolution, invasion, and counterterror, had painted the protagonists of all these systems, and then retired from life. Or so it seemed. But when he was eighty, he drew a self-portrait, "an ancient man propped on two sticks, with a great mass of white hair and beard all over his face, and the inscription 'I am still learning.' Goya," writes Mlle. de Beauvoir, "was making fun of himself and his eagerness for everything new." No doubt. But what an unexpected, toe-of-the-Christmas-stocking gift to find as one's best provision for survival—the eagerness to know: "I am still learning." There's a thing to say to God!

HEMINGWAY: THE POSTHUMOUS ACHIEVEMENT

by William Abrahams

THE NICK ADAMS STORIES
by Ernest Hemingway
Scribner's, $7.95

Of course, the most important aspect of the posthumous life of a writer is that his work should live: that it should survive and endure, as Hemingway's at its best has done and will continue to do. But this, though it is the most important, is only one aspect of living posthumously.

There is also the life of the legend that thrives after a writer's death, especially if he has already been "a legend in his own lifetime"—like Hemingway, a more glamorous figure than merely a writer. Posthumously, the legend is kept alive by a flow of gossip and the production of memoirs (whether adulatory or derogatory hardly matters) from friends, relatives, rivals, and hangers-on, until in time the legend comes to loom as large as, if not larger than, the work itself. (It is my own conviction that the single most powerful factor operating against a true appreciation of Hemingway the artist is the quasi-mythic, all too public and publicized figure of "Papa Hemingway," self-created by Dr. Hemingstein and brought to its apogee, or nadir, by A. E. Hotchner.)

Finally there are the posthumous publications, the most immediate evidence of a continuing life—those gatherings of previously published but uncollected work (in Hemingway's case his journalism and his stories of the Spanish Civil War) or manuscripts the writer left behind, finished and awaiting publication, or in a fragmentary state, or finished and put aside with dissatisfaction. So it is that now, some ten years after his death, we have yet another "new" book with the name Ernest Hemingway on the title page, which brings together some of his classic achievements in the short story, along with a story (one of his earliest) and parts of stories and episodic fragments of a novel—all being published for the first time. Even if one has faults to find with the enterprise, as I do, for anyone who is an admirer of Hemingway, as I am, it must count as an event, though a considerably lesser one than either *A Moveable Feast* or *Islands in the Stream.*

A Moveable Feast, his memoir of

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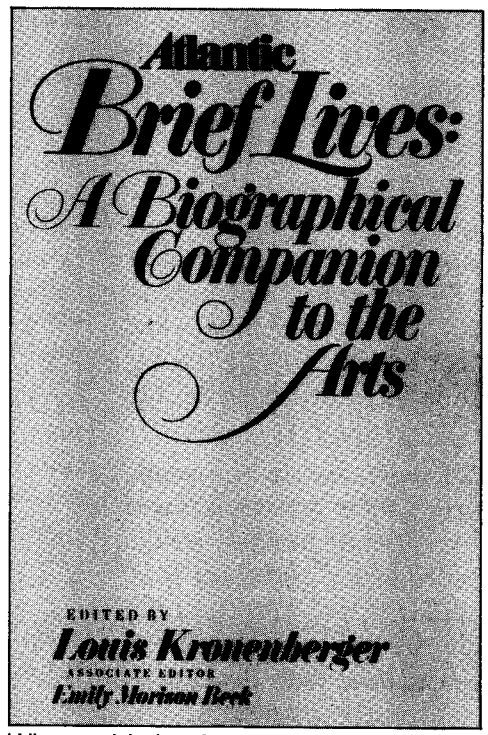

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Paris in the 1920s, and an important addition to the Hemingway canon, was the first of the posthumous publications (1964). It posed no editorial problems or uncertainties for the reader. This was a manuscript that the author had completed and prepared for publication, even including a preface, and Mrs. Hemingway supplied an admirable, brief, informative Note that told all one needed to know about the composition of the book. It might have served her as a model for any further posthumous works over which she has presided: "Ernest started writing this book in Cuba in the autumn of 1957, worked on it in Ketchum, Idaho, in the winter of 1958–59, took it with him to Spain when we went there in April, 1959, and brought it back with him to Cuba and then to Ketchum late that fall. He finished the book in the spring of 1960 in Cuba, after having put it aside to write another book, *The Dangerous Summer,* about the violent rivalry between Antonio Ordonez and Luis Miguel Dominguin in the bull rings of Spain in 1959. He made some revisions of this book in the fall in 1960 in Ketchum. It concerns the years 1921 to 1926 in Paris." For *Islands in the Stream,* the novel published in 1970, Mrs. Hemingway's Note was a good deal less satisfactory: "Charles Scribner, Jr., and I worked together preparing this book for publication from Ernest's original manuscript. Beyond the routine chores of correcting spelling and punctuation, we made some cuts in the manuscript, I feeling that Ernest would surely have made them himself. The book is all Ernest's. We have added nothing to it." But even if one grants that Mrs. Hemingway's and her husband's critical judgment precisely coincided, it would have been illuminating to know what the "cuts in the manuscript" were and where they occurred. In one sense, then, the book is truly "all Ernest's"; in another, it is not. (Ultimately, I suppose, we may expect an annotated, complete *Islands in the Stream,* much as we have had the final version of *Lady Chatterley's Lover,* then the first version, and now, coming out this summer, the *second* version.)

For *The Nick Adams Stories* Mrs. Hemingway offers no Note at all; instead there is a modest preface by Philip Young, helpful in its biographical details, but unpersuasive in its argument. The book is a collection of all the stories in which the character Nick Adams (conventionally, but too simply taken as the author's *alter ego*) plays a role, however slight. (Indeed, in at least one of the stories, told in the first person, he is not even named, so that it might well be someone else's history.) The stories are arranged chronologically, not as they were written, but as the events they describe occur. To Mr. Young these "events of Nick's life make up a meaningful narrative in which a memorable character grows from child to adolescent to soldier, veteran, writer, and parent—a sequence closely paralleling the events of Hemingway's own life." In short, some of the most masterly short stories written by an American in this century are made to serve as chapters in a shadow fictional autobiography or autobiographical novel, just as the same material was made the basis for a dreadful movie of the early 1960s called *Hemingway's Adventures of a Young Man.*

There is, I feel, a serious misconception at work here: to believe that a short story and a chapter in a novel are essentially the same, that a succession of stories about a character make him more "meaningful," more "memorable," more "understandable." But a novel is not a story: the method of the novelist is very different from that of the short-story writer. A story, to the degree that it succeeds as a work of art, contains within itself all that we need to know aesthetically, though I will grant that this may not be the case if one chooses to read it as a document in the author's biography.

Mr. Young asks us to consider "the trouble with 'Big Two-Hearted River.' Placed where it was—at the end of *In Our Time,* the first collection—it puzzled a good many readers. Placed where it goes chronologically, following the stories of World War I, its submerged tensions—the impression that Nick is exorcising some nameless anxiety—become perfectly understandable." But surely, it is the sense of some "nameless anxiety" that haunts the story and gives it its extraordinary depth and poetry. Literalism may be crucial to the journalist; it can suffocate the artist; and Hemingway, perhaps it needs to be said again, was one of the most conscious of artists. He knew what he

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was about in writing his stories; he was a master of omission and suggestion, of cadence and epithet. The secret of his art, or one of its secrets, is its appearance of giving more in fact than it does. And indeed, one wants no more from the self-contained story: we leave it with a sense of its absolute rightness. Would we alter by so much as a centimeter our admiration for Joyce's "The Dead," for example, if it were preceded by a succession of episodes from the early life of Gabriel Conway?

As I have suggested, the assumptions upon which this collection is based strike me as altogether wrong-headed. But this is not to deny the pleasure one is afforded by reacquainting oneself with one marvel after another. That matchless opening of "In Another Country":

> In the fall the war was always there, but we did not go to it any more. It was cold in the fall in Milan and the dark came very early. Then the electric lights came on, and it was pleasant along the streets looking in the windows. There was much game hanging outside the shops, and the snow powdered in the fur of the foxes and the wind blew their tails. The deer hung stiff and heavy and empty and small birds blew in the wind and the wind turned their feathers. It was a cold fall and the wind came down from the mountains.

I have no idea how many more posthumous Hemingway books we can look forward to. (The new stories in the present collection, set in italics to distinguish them from the ones already published, are recognizably lesser or apprentice work. It is quite obvious that the author knew this himself and put them aside, which is not to say that it was ill advised to bring them to light.) One volume that is sorely needed, and that would testify perfectly to the enduring life of Hemingway's art, is a complete Collected Stories, carefully edited, that would bring together all the published stories, arranged chronologically as written, and in a separate group, perhaps as an appendix, the stories that he chose not to publish in his lifetime. No doubt the arguments concerning Hemingway's "place" will continue for years to come; but the existence of such a volume as I have proposed would reaffirm, whatever the dispute over degree, a true master.

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MUSIC

LIVES WITHOUT LANGUAGE

by Robert Evett

. . . how eloquent your streams/Of lives without language . . .
—"Spring, 1940" by W. H. Auden

THE LANGUAGE AND MUSIC OF THE WOLVES
narrated by Robert Redford
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There are two great questions about music to which all answers seem somehow incomplete and unsatisfactory. The first is, what is it?; the second, where did it get started?

When I was a student, the going view was that music was "organized sound." This definition seemed large enough to cover the music of any culture, to include any possible sound that lent itself to any possible organization, to allow for improvisation, and to avoid the parochialism that would place special emphasis on music in Western civilization. John Cage put a dent in this definition by creating works in which lack of organization was the controlling structural element, or in which silence—in one case, a whole piece devoted to it—became what he called "a plastic element." Cage has left us somewhat further from a comprehensive definition than we were before. Is the wind in the willows music? Or the pounding of the surf? If we extend the definition to include any sound whatever, even a sound produced by an insensate natural force and heard by no living being, we will have crossed the line separating aesthetics from philosophy, having mislaid Art someplace along the way.

Bob Maxwell and the editors of *Natural History* magazine have fetched up a recording of wolves in full cry, which they call *The Language and Music of the Wolves.* The question, "Is it music?" is bound to cross the mind of any human listener, even though on a moment's reflection, it is clear that we do not confine our notion of "music" to art, and are inclined to hear it not only in the rain on the roof or even the "voice" (why "voice"?) of the thunder but in animal noises—the song of the lark or the purring of the cat.

We do not, unless there is some perversion that has escaped me, find "music" in the grunting of a hog, the braying of an ass, or the quacking of a duck. Yet each of these animals has been programmed to make some sort of characteristic sound, which is meaningful to other members of the species. Thus, relatively brainless birds, such as thrushes, may have only a couple of calls, one of which means "let's make a nest," and the other, "stay the hell out of my tree." When Christopher Marlowe wrote,

> By shallow rivers, to whose falls
> Melodious birds sing madrigals . . .

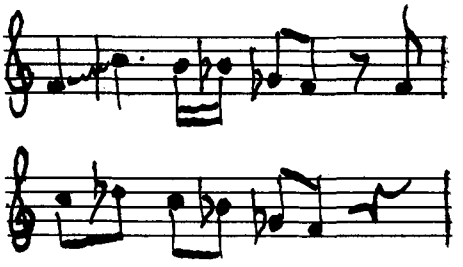
he evidently had no idea what the polyphonic explosion was all about. Shakespeare was not quite so obtuse:

> The eagle suffers little birds
> to sing,
> And is not careful what they mean
> thereby. . . .

In that animals communicate with each other through sound, it must be a hideous misfortune to have a poor sense of pitch and rhythm. For some years, I lived near a tone-deaf mourning dove (or perhaps it was the other way around, since the dove has disappeared and I have not). In any case, the dove, who has only three notes and has to make the best of them, used to start the day by getting the first two notes right, but going terribly flat on the third. This invariably aroused all mourning doves in the vicinity, and they would all whoop it up for half an hour or so, as if to show their errant brother how to do it right.

People do not usually find music in the calls and cries of mammals of other species, and even within our own species, there is a considerable variety of opinion about what constitutes superior, acceptable, and poor vocal production. In our own country, where Joan Baez and Beverly Sills are our fellow citizens, we demand vocal color and diction from one that we would not tolerate from the other. Asiatic and African vocal standards are quite different from European ones, and any Western listener who spends an evening at the Chinese opera has to admit that the shrill, nasal, brassy quality cultivated by the singers and esteemed by the connoisseurs is a taste that has to be acquired.

As for wolf calls: the opening howl recorded on this disc is disconcerting in that it lends itself to occidental musical notation and, in pitch and rhythm, comes close to being a man-made tune. If you try it on your piano, you won't get quite the right effect, but if you can get your old aunt—the one that used to sing second soprano in a church choir—to try it out, she will probably sing just enough off pitch and with just enough portamento to get the effect of the lupine original. Multiply the decibels in your aunt's voice by ten, and you may find every wolf in the vicinity calling back in reply:



The compilers of this little anthology find that there is a great deal of reply indeed, and that wolves of a pack, separated by some distance, join each other in a madrigal, much like Christopher Marlowe's birds.

In other canine species, such as the coyote, it can be less a madrigal than an oratorio twice or three times as long as "Judas Maccabeus," in which case the questions posed are (a) whether the singing is beautiful, (b) whether the animals themselves think it is beautiful, and (c) whether they perform for each other's pleasure or for some other reason. And while it is a charming conceit to think of pack life as a singing contest in which some furry Caruso who can outtrill and outbellow the others can thereby become head wolf, the evidence is that canines, like other gregarious predators, raise that colossal racket for reasons touching their survival, not their amusement.

Unable to find a wolf or even a lupine domestic dog, I tried this high-fidelity record out on a high-fidelity German shepherd (the breed, by the way, is *canis aureus* rather than *canis lupus*) and was able to catch his atten-

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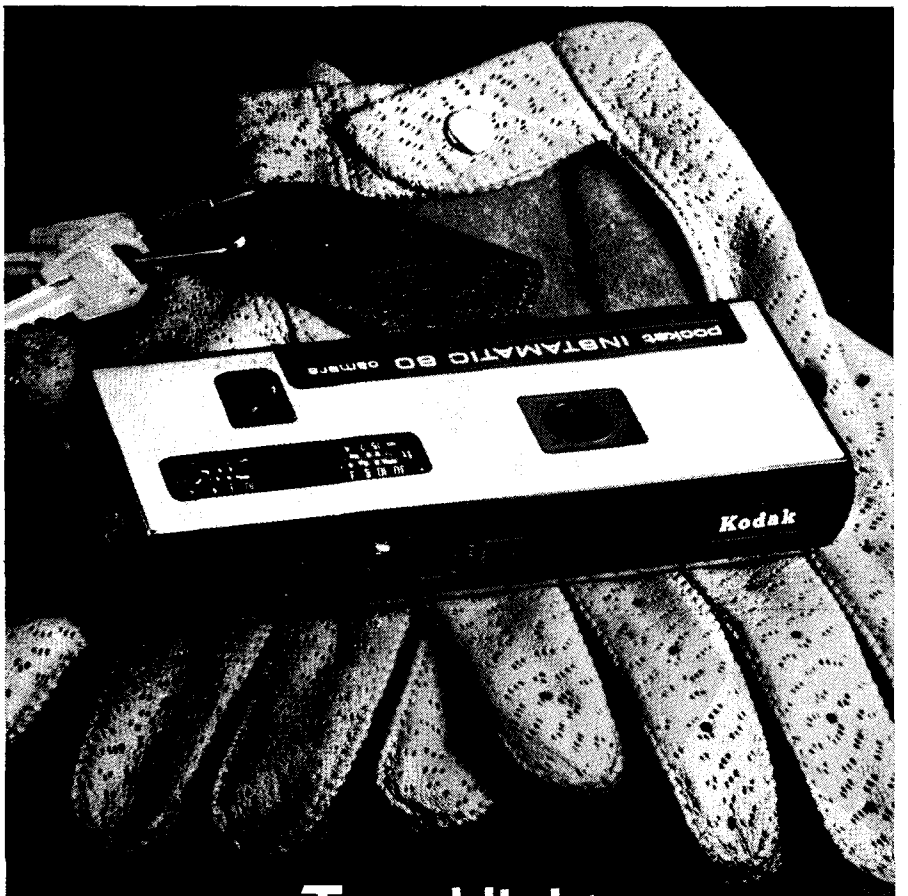
tion but to hold it only for a couple of minutes. From this experiment, I assume that the animal did not get the message of the wolf language and was as unmoved by the wolf music as he is by human music.

In trying to understand the origins of art-music among civilized peoples, we are lucky that savagery has survived long enough to be studied by anthropologists, or even observed by the likes of Fenimore Cooper. We know, for instance, that in primitive cultures, the ability to imitate animal calls accurately is a greatly valued accomplishment. It may very well be that human notions of musical beauty originated in those birdcalls that human beings imitated. In a work written ten years ago called *Adventures,* the avant-garde composer Gyorgy Ligeti built a piece around a vocal palette of the most primitive conceivable sounds—kissing, sucking, sighing, whispering, wailing, roaring, bellowing—all to a text of nonsense syllables. The work is almost entirely successful in showing how much people can convey with their voices, even in the absence of language.

As music in the human sense has evolved, it has drawn heavily on sounds imitated from nature—stylized, ritualized, and made to fit the needs of a culture. A trait of the music of people, as opposed to that of birds, or crickets, or tigers in the nest, seems to be that it is always separated from language by artifice. Singing in the bathtub is as truly music as singing in the Metropolitan Opera House. In either case, it is something contrived—whether for pleasure or for some other effect.

Thus, while it may be said that all the sources of music may be drawn ultimately from sounds and noises that occur in our aural environment and come to us unbidden—from nature, or, for that matter, from such totally unnatural sounds as an airplane taking off or a train going around a bend—these sources are not music themselves. Music does not exist in nature. It is a human invention, and if humanity decides to consider the song of the nightingale, or the cicada, or the wolf to be music, it is humanity's decision. The animals themselves do not hear their music as music.

The compilers of this record are ecologists concerned about the possible extinction of a species. In anthropomorphizing the wolf, they are



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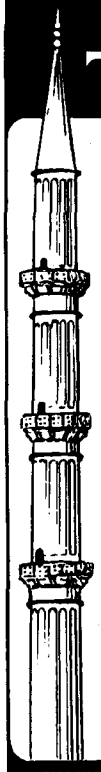

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trying to appeal to the Walt Disney in us all, and their efforts seem commendable enough. The sound recorded here may well be part of the primeval source material of music, but whatever else it is, it is mindless yapping, probably involuntary, and something wolves do simply because they are wolves. People, thank God, do not sing in public simply because they are people and have to respond to a primeval urge. Perhaps this is why we have music and other animals don't.

MOVIES

SPRING MOVIEGOING

by David Denby

Those who say *The Godfather* sentimentalizes the Mafia are simply not responding to the harsher elements in the movie's portrait of the Corleone family, particularly the growing coldness that develops in Michael Corleone (Al Pacino), culminating in the brilliant moment at the end when he excludes his wife from everything that's important in his life. Perhaps the ones crying "sentimentality" are actually bothered by the obvious fact that many in the audience admire the Corleones, or perhaps they don't think murderers should be allowed any pleasing human qualities at all. But what counts in the narrative arts is fullness of characterization, and a ruthless killer may be as contradictory in his personal attributes as any other human being. For Mario Puzo, who wrote the novel, and Francis Ford Coppola, who directed the film and collaborated with Puzo on the script, the Mafia chief Don Corleone embodies moral authority and brutal corruption in equal amounts: he gives life and takes it away, administers rewards and punishments, presides over love and death. It's a grandiose conception which might easily have collapsed into banality, but Marlon Brando holds our reactions to the character in a tension of hatred, admiration, and awe. When Don Corleone cries at the death of his son, we can't help thinking of all the sons killed by *his* orders, but his emotion is no less moving for the thought. Only the highest art, not sentimentality, could make us cry along with a killer.

The Godfather, like *Fiddler on the Roof,* pays tribute to the strength of the traditional patriarchal family, but, in the case of the Corleone clan, carried to its lunatic extreme (an extreme which does not seem to repel the audience). These immigrants and their children have built the family into an invincible force, an economic and quasi-military wedge which cuts violently into an alien society that resists them at every point; if you get in the way or step out of the wedge, you are dead.

But Puzo and Coppola know that nothing frustrates an audience more than watching violence it cannot enjoy. Thus they get us to root for the Corleones, even though they are murderers who pervert the family ideal, by telling the story entirely from the Corleones' point of view and by casting talented and humanly attractive actors who bring out the sweetness and warmth that may coexist with the will to commit murder. Audience identification with young Michael Corleone is so great that when he assassinates two family enemies, people applaud, cheer, and shout instructions at the screen.

Moreover, the filmmakers have correctly judged the temper of the time—it's hard to imagine the audience cheering for a squadron of police or for a platoon of GI's in Vietnam. An audience made cynical by repeated exposure to corporate and political scandals may feel America's completely rotten anyway, and that it's better to be crooked out in the open, with guns blazing, than furtively, through bribes and back-room deals.

Yet even as we relish the comedy of tribal warfare in the corporate age, we should be aware that *The Godfather* is disingenuous insofar as it implies that the Mafia has no victims outside the Mafia itself. The little guy who owns the neighborhood furniture store and pays protection, the people bilked by loan sharks, the taxpayers whose earnings are channeled into Mafia hands by crooked officials, the countless junkies and prostitutes—none of these victims of ordinary

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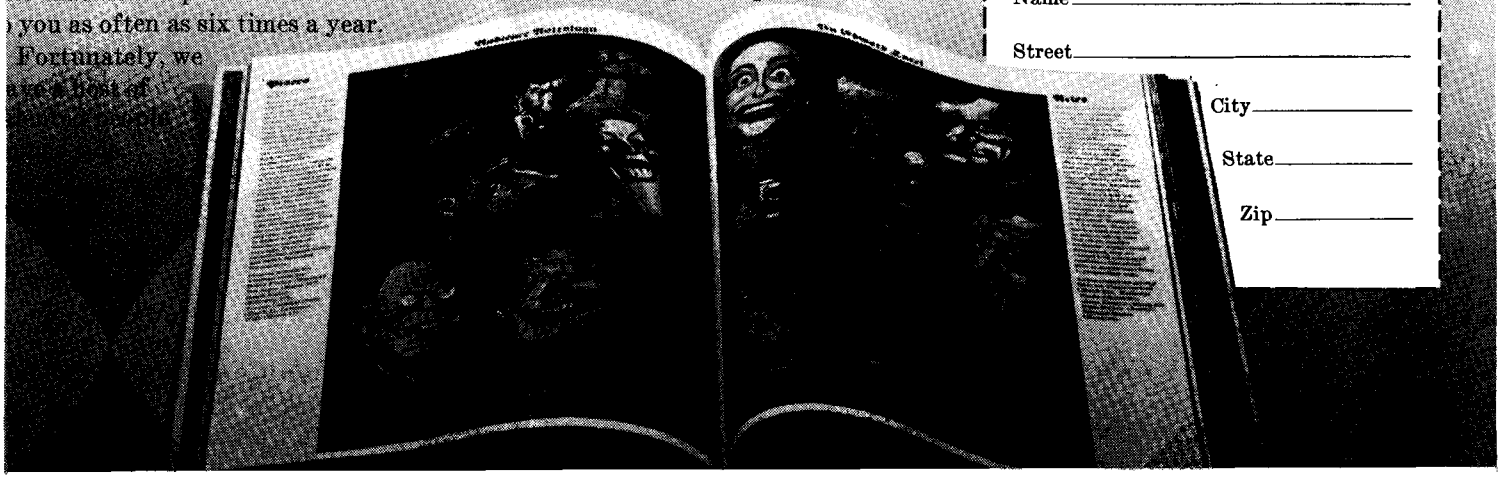

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Mafia operations are present in the movie to reduce our enjoyment or confuse our reactions. It's as if the principal families of organized crime did nothing but feud among themselves. But perhaps we shouldn't ask for everything. If Puzo and Coppola had introduced an ordinary innocent victim, the mood of the film would have changed from boisterous near-comedy to socially-conscious pathos; pleasure would have given way to outrage, and we might have lost the very good film we have now.

It takes a rare movie to reclaim those millions of moviegoers lost to television. Nearly everyone came out of his living room for *Love Story,* but in that strange mass phenomenon there was a large element of conscious self-parody and resignation, as if one were submitting to some humiliating, ludicrous, but wholly irresistible force of nature. In the case of *The Godfather,* people are genuinely eager to see it, and then they chew it over for hours afterwards. Standing in line outside a movie theater during a chilly spring day, one senses some of the excitement and fellow-feeling that must have existed in the 1940s when as many as 84 million people (rather than the current total of 17 million) went to the movies in a given week, when the movies were *the* mass medium and formed the unifying experience of several generations of Americans.

The Godfather is for everyone. Not so *Slaughterhouse-Five.* It is one of those movies specially designed for youth, and future cultural historians may find in its softness and self-pity an accurate reflection of the post-activist campus mood. Director George Roy Hill has kept the movie extremely faithful to the style and structure of Vonnegut's popular book, which isn't saying a great deal in its favor.

Billy Pilgrim, the novel's vacuous hero, suffers through the fire-bombing of Dresden while being held there as a prisoner of war, and Hill effectively re-creates the ghoulish aftermath of that night which killed 135,000 people—the mass burning of corpses, the shooting of an American prisoner for trivial looting, the dazed wandering through the rubble of the ruined city. But the whole significance of Dresden—an atrocity performed by *our* side—is passed over so lightly that when the movie ends, kids in the theater can be heard asking, "Who did the bombing?" Following Vonnegut's example, screenwriter Stephen Geller is so eager to be cool about apocalypse, so eager to demonstrate the arbitrary nature of war's cruelty, that he succeeds in making the destruction of Dresden into a meaningless event. But of course what happened at Dresden was not arbitrary, not random, and not an inevitable occurrence of war. By taking Dresden out of any historical or political context, Vonnegut and Geller and Hill reduce it to a mere symbol of hopelessness. But if that was their actual intention, they might just as well have used a small hamlet that was destroyed by a navigator's error.

We can see that Billy Pilgrim (played by Michael Sacks) is supposed to serve as an innocent who silently bears witness to one of the century's most brutal acts, but he's so limp and unresponsive that he's closer to insentience than innocence. It's troubling to think that *Slaughterhouse-Five* may owe its popularity to the presence of this soggy nothing; his experience is structured to demonstrate the uselessness of reacting to horror or of trying to lead a reasonable life in crazy America, and for the young he has that same narcissistic appeal as the Salinger heroes, who, in their very passivity, manage to appear superior to the surrounding world of phonies, paranoids, and fools. Billy is kicked around by everyone, and all those late-adolescent feelings of victimization can easily be projected onto him. Like the Salinger hero, Billy has a special sensitivity, a special spiritual skill—he has "come unstuck in time," and can travel backwards and forwards in his life, as well as escape, through a "time warp," to the happy planet of Tralfamadore. But when the filmmakers start playing Vonnegut's science-fiction games with time, they destroy the coherence and power of the prisoner-of-war narrative (which includes Ron Leibman's scabrous performance as an extremely paranoid GI), and they dispel whatever meager outrage they've built up over the insanities of war. Like Vonnegut before them, they use mass destruction as an occasion for whimsy.

Silent Running, directed by Douglas Trumbell, is science-fiction cockamamie of a more conventional sort, even though it has an unusual hero—an ecology nut. As played by Bruce Dern (a good actor, but someone should really make him forgo the popping-eyes-and-quivering-nostrils style of intensity), he's the only human being left in the year 2008 who's willing to keep a forest alive in outer space after the earth has been completely defoliated. This spaceship Savonarola, morally superior to the entire world, runs around in a cassock making speeches to his fellow astronauts about "the simple wonder of the leaf"; in case you have any doubts about his purity, the tirades are usually followed by Joan Baez singing mournfully. This movie turns the rhetoric of a good cause into unspeakable cant. The technical effects are handsome but standard, and *Silent Running* is saved from total boredom only by that old sci-fi standby, the adorable robot. In this case there are three of these walking slot machines, and they make whimpering noises when personally affronted, drum their pincers in boredom, cheat at poker, and water the flowers after the hero's blown himself up and there's no human left who cares about living things. This, I believe, is known as a devastating irony.

Mon Oncle Antoine, an award-winning French-Canadian film directed by Claude Jutra, has one long sequence—a rural sleigh ride in early evening—that is as beautiful as anything in recent movies. A fourteen-year-old boy and his elderly, half-soused uncle huddle together in furs; an ancient horse plods quietly through the thick snow; barren trees, a pale blue sky, and an endless white landscape surround them in silence. The details converge to produce an image of such perfection that one is extremely moved without knowing why; perhaps the rush of feeling is caused by an association with Currier & Ives' winter scenes, a longing for the American rural past, or, deeper still, an echo of some happy or dangerous journey in childhood whose precise emotional resonance had been lost for years. The film is about a boy growing up in a poor, out-of-the-way mining town in Quebec, and there are other such moments—modest, uncomplicated, and queerly forlorn—which produce the same feeling of contentment: the hero and his friend gape in awe at a beautiful woman's breasts, and Jutra stages the scene as an experience of loveliness

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rather than a bout of nasty adolescent spying; the mine-owner throws presents from his sleigh onto the workers' doorsteps, and the workers' wives, hiding behind curtains, surmise from this gesture that their husbands won't be receiving wage increases in the coming year. The movie creates the atmosphere of medium poverty to perfection.

Unfortunately, the beautiful moments don't add up. The structure is far too loose: one important character is developed with some care and then made to disappear; significant relations are only faintly sketched in; and the hero isn't allowed the emotional expressiveness that would make us care about him. Young Jacques Gagnon looks sensitive and arrogant, and his immense luminescent eyes take in the meager life of the town (Black Lake) with the silent judgment of a boy who knows he's superior to those around him. Like Anarene in *The Last Picture Show,* this place is rather short on variety, excitement, and older authority figures who might serve as models for the young. The adults grumble, gather against the cold, and get by with drink, sex, or private obsessions, leaving the children to scrape along as best they may. Nevertheless, for all his sensitive attention to the selfishness of adult behavior, Jutra doesn't quite seem to know what an isolated child feels. The movie is beautiful, but too modest, unformed, and uninvolving.

There's nothing sadder in New York at the moment than the sight of those huge theatrical and movie billboards in the Times Square area facing each other high over Broadway with absolutely nothing printed on them. Business in the area has been bad, so bad that some of the largest theaters have remained closed for months at a time, patiently waiting for that sure-fire hit or at least the moderate success which pays for the janitors and the ushers. But the one thing that never fails is pornography, America's last cottage industry, and dirty-movie shops have been opening in every available nook and cranny, including some places that have seen better days. The old "Latin Quarter" nightclub is one such establishment, and it's a rather strange experience, when going to see a movie called *Hot Circuit,* to hand your ticket to a polite elderly gentleman in a tuxedo, proceed up a gold-railed, mirror-lined staircase (the last thing you want to see in a dirty-movie house is your own face), and then enter an auditorium decorated with red satin, golden fretwork, and pale green candelabras.

As for *Hot Circuit,* which won first prize at the New York Erotic Film Festival, it follows the structure of Max Ophuls' great film *La Ronde,* in which a series of sexual vignettes are joined in a chain by overlapping characters. This provides a certain formal unity (for those who want it), but pornography's need for immediate variation is so great that some of the characters are forced to make rather abrupt changes in their predilections: a man who appears as an aggressive urban seducer in one sequence allows himself to be tied to a suburban jungle gym in the next, where he is serviced by a young girl who, in turn, is seduced by a lesbian in the sequence after that, and so on. The recorded dialogue sequences allow some self-conscious joking to break up the silent, impacted quality that usually reigns in movie pornography, but just as the performers are working up a funny bit of business they must slide to the floor for sex, and so we're caught in the near-humiliation of impoverished actors who would probably prefer to do something else for a living than fornicate on camera.

Further north, at an old theater that was once a leading art house, a movie called *Boys in the Sand* completed a fifteen-week run in early April. It's New York's first hard-core homosexual hit, and the style turns out to be fake-naïve lyricism, with lots of woods, sand, sun-in-the-lens, Debussy, Ravel, and naked young men emerging, Proteus-like, from the sea or Fire Island swimming pools to join their lovers. Unfortunately the lyric impulse is pathetically at odds with the clumsy handling of the camera and with the apparent impossibility of photographing sexual acts of any sort in a way that doesn't make them look mechanical or ugly. The great joke of this pornography epidemic is that very little of the real experience has been revealed or even suggested. No doubt this is the reason why the stuff is so popular. The pornographer and the pornography audience are like pilgrims on an endless quest whose obvious destination is regarded with fear and carefully avoided whenever it comes into sight.

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MIDNIGHT OIL
by V. S. Pritchett
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This is the second section of an autobiography, which was begun in *A Cab at the Door,* a mirthful account of his boyhood, and which now proceeds with wry honesty to tell of Pritchett's determination to become a writer. He was the eldest of a large brood, whose father, a Christian Scientist, trusted in "the Divine Mind" and had a genius for failure. The family crises were frequent while the head of the household was dodging one set of creditors and looking for a new job in London, and the effect of the violent quarrels on the son "was to close my heart for a long time." They also drove him at the age of twenty-one to Paris, where with £20 in his pocket he stayed out of reach of his father. It was in keeping with his reticence that he never met any of the other expatriates—Gertrude Stein, Hemingway, Joyce.

Pritchett, in his garret life and often famished, concentrated on disciplining himself: through his work as a photographer's assistant or as a salesman for glue and ostrich feathers, he learned to speak French and he purchased the time to read the French novelists and to write his own brief descriptive pieces, which he submitted to the London reviews and to the *Christian Science Monitor.* It was the *Monitor* which began to pay him regularly, and soon sent him as its correspondent to Ireland.

His two years in Paris gave him the confidence to stand alone, and his life in Ireland, then emerging from the Troubles, unlocked his imagination. "The Irish," he writes, "live for the story. They woke something in me"—"they" meaning Synge, Yeats, AE, Sean O'Casey, James Stephens, and Lady Gregory. The Abbey Theatre meant more to him than the fighting. He responded to the beauty of the country, and in his encounters he began to see the possibility of short stories. He had never gone to college, but "Literature," he felt, "was not something to be studied or something to be caught up with, but to be practiced and at once."

Spain, his next assignment, was a tougher task. The country at first repelled him; the Spanish churches seemed "like warehouses of melancholy and death." In Spain, still worried by the lack of money and suffering long separations from his actress-wife, he worked hard, harder than he had ever done before; and it was his book *Marching Spain,* in which he walked from one end of the country to the other, that at last made a dent on the perceptive English public. The English writers, when Pritchett came home, treated him with a sociable ironic discouragement, one critic going so far as to call him "a genius with a brain packed in ice." He had now found his place and a new wife and was happy. A lean and illuminating book in which one feels the adversities and sees the experiences that formed this sharp-edged critic and storyteller.

NO NAME IN THE STREET
by James Baldwin
Dial, $5.95

More eloquent than W. E. B. Du Bois, more penetrating than Richard Wright, and more involved than either, James Baldwin in this new statement stands as the arch-accuser of white civilization and of the United States in particular. From being a street boy in Harlem, he has risen to international fame, and in his autobiographical essay we see the conflict "between my life as a writer and my life as—not spokesman exactly, but as public witness to the situation of black people." He writes as an outraged and frightened man, the fear deepening in him as the leaders to whom he was devoted, Martin Luther King, Jr., Medgar Evers, Malcolm X, were wiped out by hatred and as his hope for justice was poisoned by the shady imprisonment of his former chauffeur and bodyguard, Tony Maynard. His life abroad, where he fled after King's death, has given him little solace—momentary relief with the Algerians but no help in reading

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Camus—and the deterioration he observed on each return home, whether in New York, Hollywood, or Washington, prompts him to write that "as social and moral and political and sexual entities, white Americans are probably the sickest and certainly the most dangerous people, of any color, to be found in the world today."

One must brace oneself emotionally to read such an indictment, but one should, for with all its intemperance and lack of common pity, it contains truths not to be denied. As he shuttles back and forth in time and place, Baldwin flings out angry judgments which tempt the reader to answer back: "the crucifixion of Alger Hiss" (oh, come on!); his contempt for American liberals during the McCarthy era (with no mention of Ed Murrow, Elmer Davis, Learned Hand, and Joseph Welch); his unwillingness to place the murder of Martin Luther King, Jr., in the same wave of violence which destroyed President and Robert Kennedy (these are acts which have wounded us all).

Baldwin is right in saying that the black and white confrontation is "crucial, containing the shape of the American future and the only potential of a truly valid American identity"; right in his feeling of outrage; right in saying, "I'm black and I'm proud"; but wrong in not perceiving that there are millions of thoughtful white Americans intent that reconciliation shall work.

THE MALCONTENTS
by C. P. Snow
Scribner's, $6.95

C. P. Snow has given himself the most difficult pitch a senior novelist could imagine in writing this new narrative about a group of student radicals. There were seven of them who formed "the core," Stephen and Mark, the more idealistic, from Cambridge, the other five from St. Hugh's, the local university in a small cathedral town. Their cause, as with many of their American contemporaries, is racism. In their exploration of the local slums they bring to light a landlord who has been rack-renting some West Indians without mercy, and probing further, find that the property is owned by a prominent Tory M.P., a minister in the shadow cabinet. After many months of scheming,

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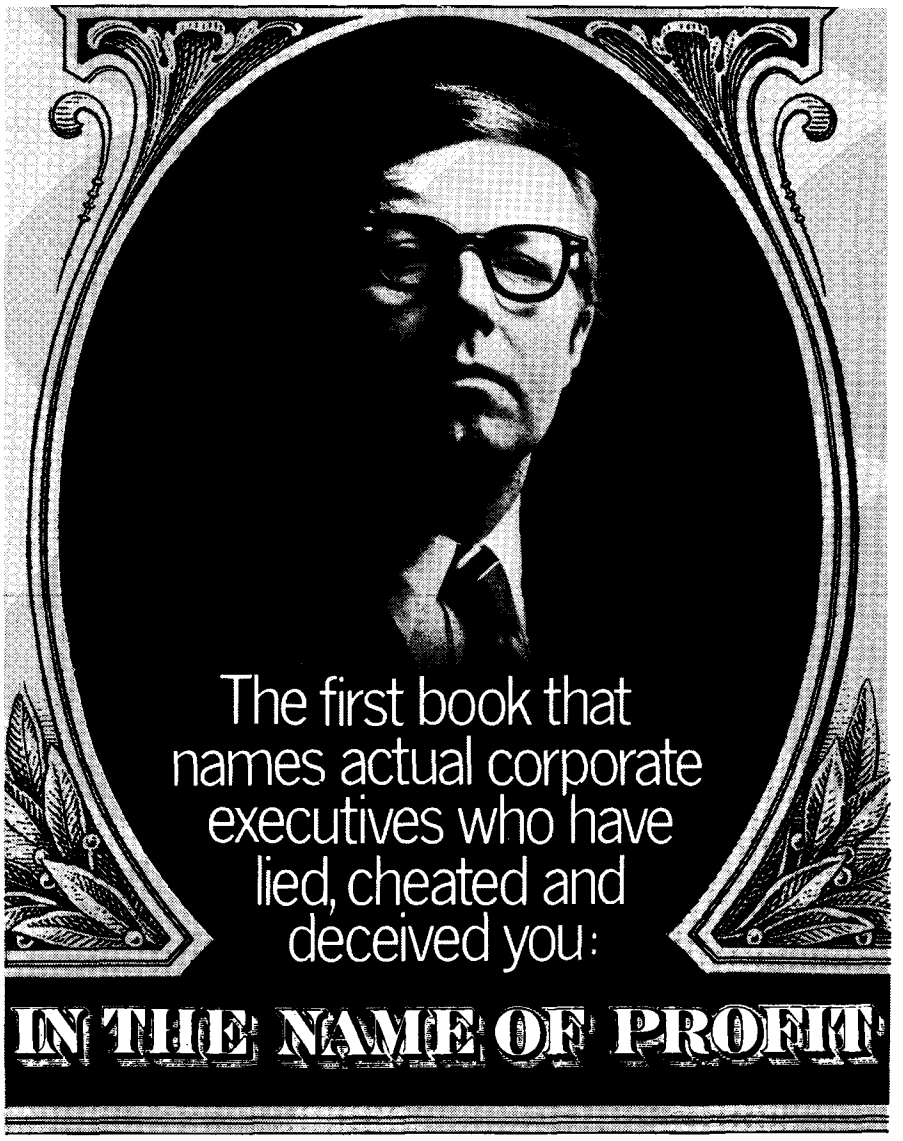
in which they link up with other activists, and just before they launch their denunciation, Stephen, the leader, learns that they have been betrayed and that the Establishment is moving to squelch their plans.

The novel begins with the news of the betrayal: the landlord's agent, whom they had bribed, had leaked, but what was worse—since the authorities had such exact knowledge of their design—there must be an informer in their midst. In anger and confusion the core gather for meeting after meeting trying to finger the informer. In the intensity of their suspicion and speculation, character and motives are revealed and their unity begins to crack, but this humorless talk without action goes on for 119 pages, which, as Lord Snow should know, is too long a porch for a novel as short as his.

At a final meeting, when drugs are used as an aid, perhaps to spring the culprit, the quiet little Bernie walks out of the window to his death, and from that point on the story is in high gear, with the light playing remorselessly on Lance, the dispenser of the drugs, Neil, the passionate Trotskyite, Mark, the rich young independent—is it he who doped Bernie's drink?—and conspicuously, Stephen, the most subtly developed character of them all, with his skepticism, his arrogance, and his self-distrust. In so short a compass, there is not time to explore the various origins of these rebels, but Lord Snow is expert in the scenes which tell us why Stephen has turned against his parents and through them against society, and how in all likelihood he will be reconciled by his love for his camp follower, Tess. Readers who persevere through the arid beginning will be rewarded.

THE OPTIMIST'S DAUGHTER
by Eudora Welty
Random House, $5.95

In a novel of contrasts, Miss Welty, who is so at home in Mississippi, has dramatized the struggle between two women, of sharply different breeds of Southern culture, as they fight to preserve the life of the man they love. Judge McKelva, the leading citizen of Mount Salus, Mississippi, was seventy-one when he noticed that his eyesight was fading. He had been warned that a cataract was forming in



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his left eye, and now that the specialist in New Orleans, an old friend, has diagnosed a slipped retina in the right eye, an operation is imminent. Becky, the judge's first wife, had lost her mind and drifted into death after a series of operations on her eyes, and Dr. Courtland is taking no chances this time.

At the bedside are Laurel, the only daughter, herself a war widow, who has flown down from Chicago where she is a designer, and Fay, the judge's second wife, who is younger than Laurel and has been married to the judge for a year and a half. There is hostility between them, for each in her way is possessive of the immobile patient whose head must not be moved, and during their separate watches in the hospital their reactions reveal their differences, Laurel reading her father to sleep, and striving to hold him with her memories of her mother, and Fay, aggressive, crude, impatient with the hospital, determined to call the judge back to his infatuation. But the big man, so optimistic at the outset, lies in silence, unresponsive to either, and after three weeks Fay recklessly takes things into her own hands.

The best scenes in the book occur in the McKelva house before and after the funeral. The house has been cleaned, the flowers and the whiskey provided by Laurel's bridesmaids and the judge's cronies, and here in the presence of the open coffin, Fay, joined by an overwhelming contingent of her family from Texas, makes her crass, dramatic appeal for sympathy. The contrast between the effusive sentiment of the old neighbors and the insensitive curiosity of the strangers is shocking comedy, amusing to the ear, infuriating to Laurel, and the most skillful piece of writing. When the Texans leave, and Fay with them, Laurel has three days in which to trim her mother's garden and sort through her father's desk before Fay takes possession, and in this pensive hiatus she retraces the strangely tormented career of Becky, her mother. I feel that in their final confrontation, Fay's jealousy becomes unbelievably clairvoyant. "I don't know what you're making such a big fuss over. What do you see in that thing?" she asks. "The past isn't a thing to me. I belong to the future, didn't you know that?" and with that taunt Laurel is routed.

SHORT REVIEWS: BOOKS

by Phoebe Adams

THE DESCENT OF WOMAN by Elaine Morgan. Stein and Day, $7.95. Irritated by the spate of books on early man in which his origins, development, tribulations, achievements, magic, hunting methods, arts, diseases, religion, and social organization are all discussed at length and solemnly applied to the understanding of modern man, although, in fact, the alleged information on these matters is 90 percent guesswork, Miss Morgan has written a book about early woman. She is not an archaeologist, anthropologist, animal behaviorist, or historian, but she does have a lively imagination and access to a library, which makes her qualifications as good as those of most writers in the eolithic reconstruction field. The book begins with a semi-arboreal lady hominid who, driven by drought from dying forest to open savannah, "knew at once she wasn't going to like it there." It ends, some millions of years later, with an early Stone-Age woman, competently self-supporting but conned into keeping a lumbering, greedy male about the cave for his sporadic usefulness as a provider of mammoth cutlets. Miss Morgan has read everybody, generally with a disrespectful eye, and has scooped up such evidence as serves her purpose. What doesn't serve is tossed briskly into the kitchen midden. Whether one takes her ideas seriously or not, Miss Morgan's book is engaging for its nerviness and ingenuity. It also has a tongue-in-cheek humor hitherto unknown in enterprises of this kind.

BEFORE THE DELUGE by Otto Friedrich. Harper & Row, $10.00. Subtitled "a portrait of Berlin in the 1920's," the book actually begins with the German defeat in 1918 and proceeds to Hitler's triumph in 1933. Mr. Friedrich has collected official records, private documents, and the spoken recollections of people who lived through the period. Fitted together like a jigsaw puzzle, the fragments eventually produce a coherent and fascinating picture of a city where art and riot flourished side by side and incredibility was the normal state of things.

THE QUIET END OF EVENING by Honor Tracy. Random House, $6.95. This may not be the moment for a comic novel about Ireland, but if one can forget Belfast and pretend that the explosively self-created island of Inishnamona lies off the old Somerville and Ross coast, Miss Tracy's tale of bombs among the peat bogs is one of her best.

THINGS TO COME by Herman Kahn and B. Bruce-Briggs. Macmillan, $7.95. The authors propose to enlighten the public on the probable developments of the next twenty years. They foresee that the world will roll on in the way it is headed—unless it takes another direction—with conditions steadily improving—unless they abruptly worsen. This is taking a book to do what the Delphic oracle used to manage in one sentence. We live in windy times. Incidentally, the one constant vision in the murky crystal ball is the efficiency, honesty, and general beneficence of "multi-national corporations," one hundred of which are currently subsidizing The Hudson Institute, Incorporated, which employs the Messrs. Kahn and Bruce-Briggs. We have here what looks remarkably like a flack job.

BONECRACK by Dick Francis. Harper & Row, $5.95. A fast game of wits and violence played between cantankerous common sense and resourceful lunacy, and guaranteed to drive the reader to hysterical dithers and jitters.

WE by Yevgeny Zamyatin. Viking, $6.50. There have been so many satires on future totalitarian states since 1924, when this novel was originally published, that it is hard to work up any excitement over it. Clever, yes; courageous, yes—the author died in exile, and the book has never appeared in his native Russia. But Huxley and Orwell, who actually wrote later than Zamyatin, have made the whole robot society theme overfamiliar. The interest of Zamyatin's novel is primarily historical. Translated by Mirra Ginsburg.

CHINA, INDIA, AND THE RUINS OF WASHINGTON by Austin Coates. John Day, $10.00. Mr. Coates is a veteran of the British administrative sys-

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GO PLACIDLY AMID THE NOISE & HASTE, & REMEMBER WHAT PEACE THERE MAY BE IN SILENCE. AS FAR AS POSSIBLE WITHOUT SURRENDER BE on good terms with all persons. Speak your truth quietly & clearly; and listen to others, even the dull & ignorant; they too have their story. ♦ Avoid loud and aggressive persons, they are vexations to the spirit. If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain & bitter; for always there will be greater & lesser persons than yourself. Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans. ♦ Keep interested in your own career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time. Exercise caution in your business affairs; for the world is full of trickery. But let this not blind you to what virtue there is; many persons strive for high ideals; and everywhere life is full of heroism. ♦ Be yourself. Especially, do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love; for in the face of all aridity & disenchantment it is perennial as the grass. ♦ Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth. Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. But do not distress yourself with imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue & loneliness. Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself. ♦ You are a child of the universe, no less than the trees & stars; you have a right to be here. And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should. ♦ Therefore be at peace with God, whatever you conceive Him to be, and whatever your labors & aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life keep peace with your soul. ♦ With all its sham, drudgery & broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world. Be careful. Strive to be happy. ♦ ♦

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tem in the Far East, and still lives in Hong Kong. He believes, and explains in a peppery, amusing style, that Orientals think in terms very different from those of the West, and that European nations cannot hope for effective dealings with Eastern states until our diplomats understand what those terms really are. To the suggestion that Orientals might learn to understand us, Mr. Coates would reply that the habits of 4000 years cannot be altered, and also that Orientals do not understand each other, the Indian mind being chronically adrift in the clouds and the Chinese entrenched in the kitchen.

GOING TO AMERICA by Terry Coleman. Pantheon, $8.95. The terrible story of the Irish famine refugees has been told before, but there was a great deal of emigration from the rest of Britain to the United States going on at the same period. Mr. Coleman has written a thoroughly interesting history of the whole emigrant traffic, with much detail on individual experiences, the ramshackle lack of government control on both sides of the Atlantic, and the intractability of shipping companies.

THE GODFORGOTTEN by Gladys Schmitt. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, $6.95. On the premise, rather unlikely even for the tenth century, that the members of a religious community isolated by flood and earthquake would not only assume they had been overlooked on the Day of Judgment but that during a century none of their descendants would question the notion, Miss Schmitt has constructed a grim, intelligent novel examining the nature of Christian doctrine. The tale is full of action and outrage.

A POLITICAL EDUCATION by Harry McPherson. Atlantic–Little Brown, $10.95. Two articles drawn from this memoir have appeared in the magazine.

THE BRIDGE by H. L. Mountzoures. Scribner's, $7.95. A portion of this novel has been published by *The Atlantic.*

THE ROSA LUXEMBURG CONTRACEPTIVES COOPERATIVE by Leopold Tyrmand. Macmillan, $5.95. *The Atlantic* published an article taken from this book.

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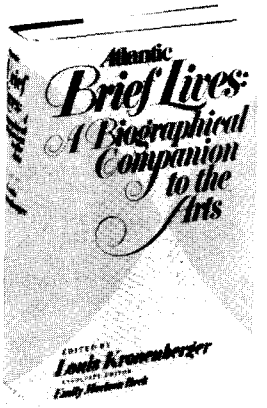

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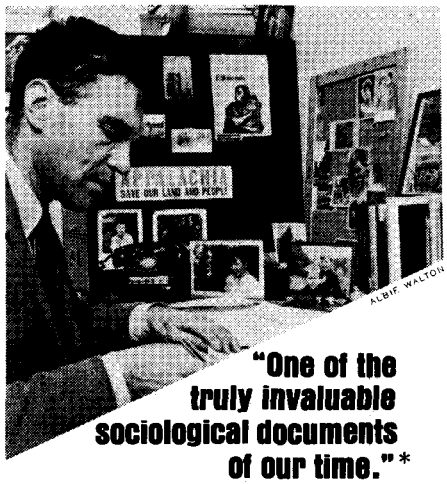

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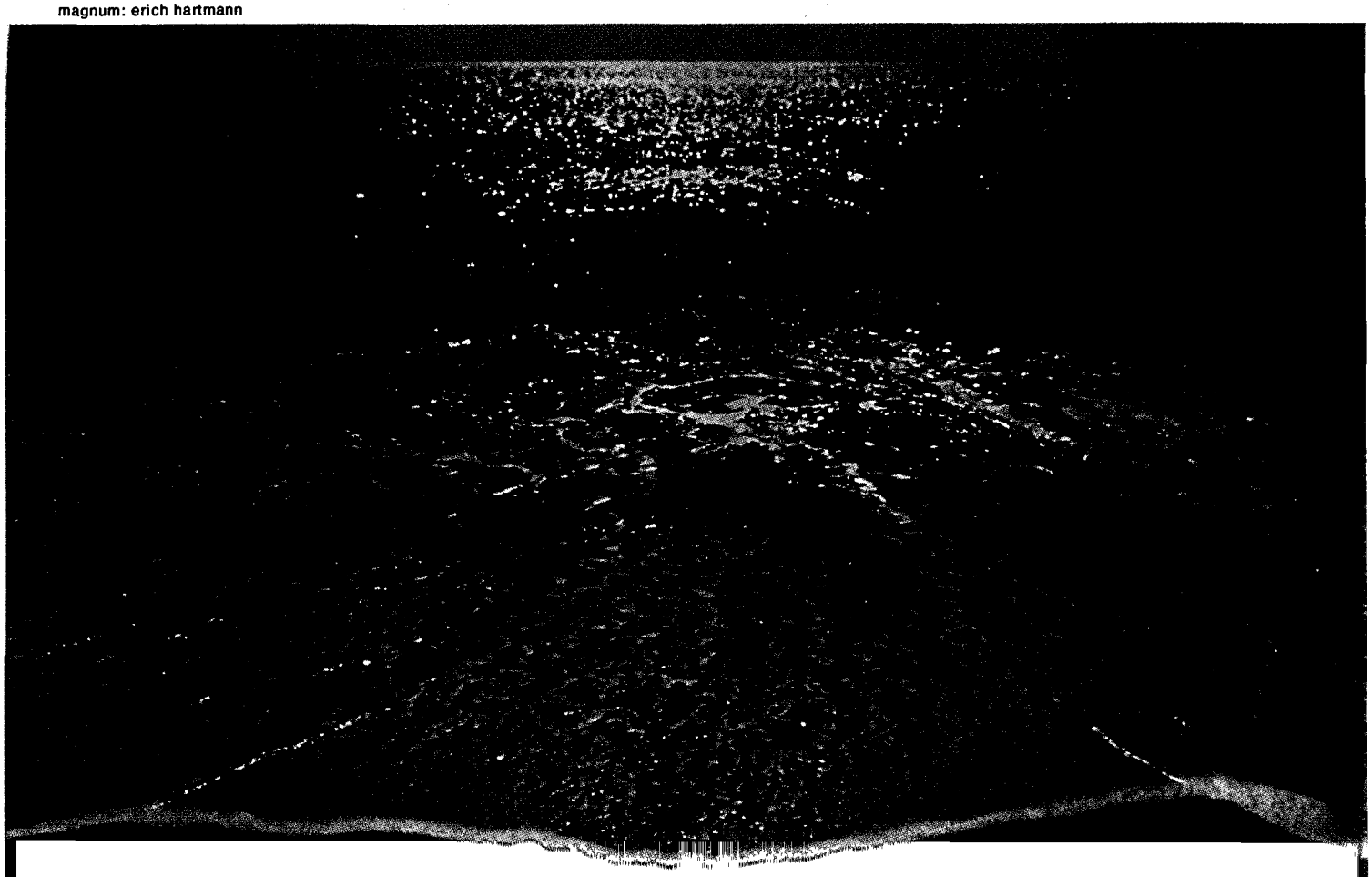

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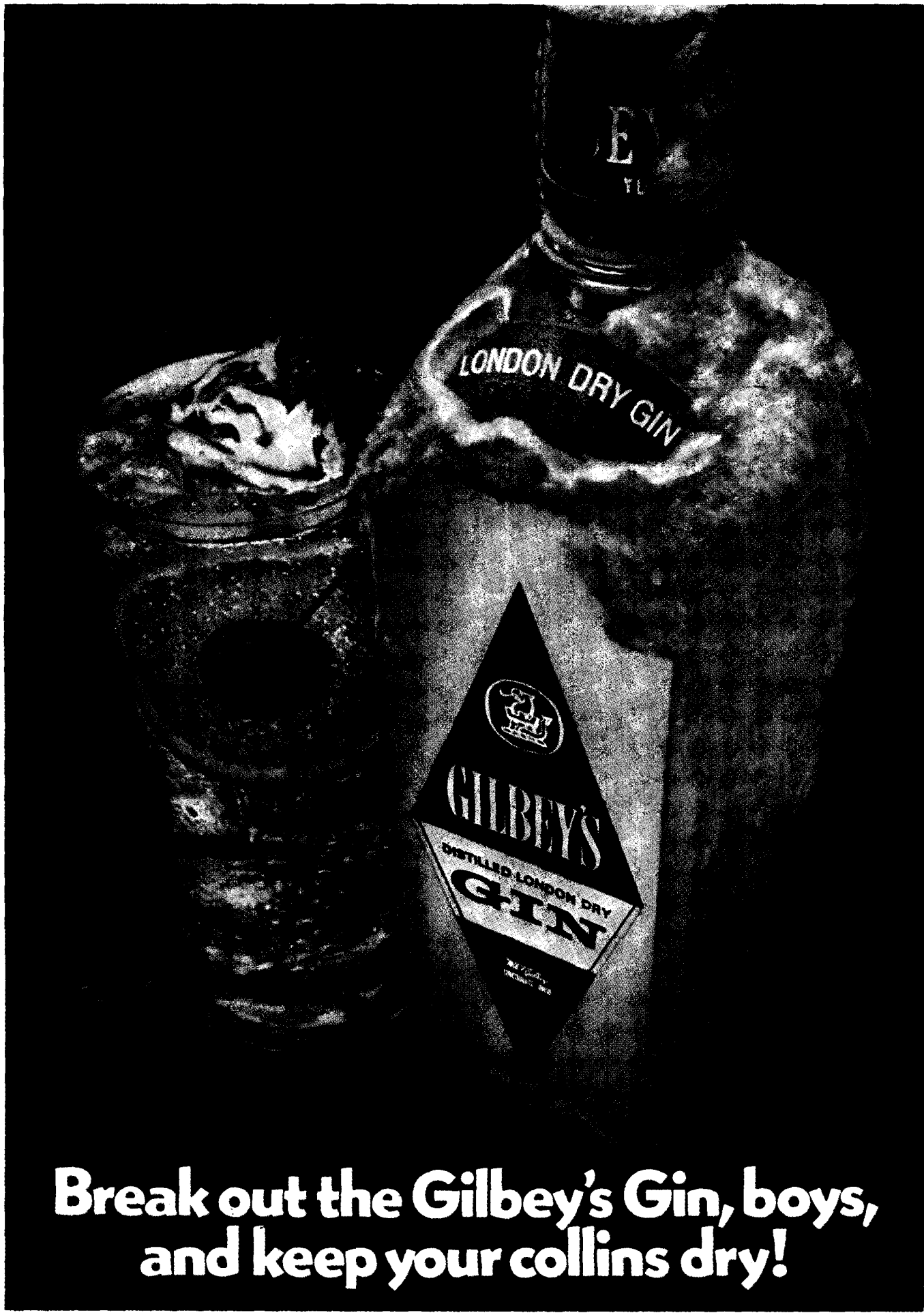

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